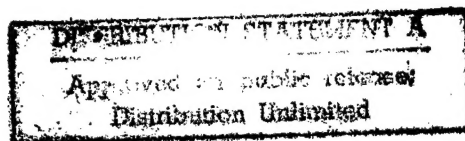


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USSR Report

MILITARY AFFAIRS

MILITARY HISTORY JOURNAL

No. 8, August 1984

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27 December 1984

USSR REPORT

MILITARY AFFAIRS

MILITARY HISTORY JOURNAL

No 8, August 1984

Except where indicated otherwise in the table of contents the following is a complete translation of the Russian-language monthly journal VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL.

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SOVIET MILITARY ACHIEVEMENTS IN IASI-KISHINEV OPERATION VIEWED

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 8, Aug 84 (signed to press 24 Jul 84) pp 9-17

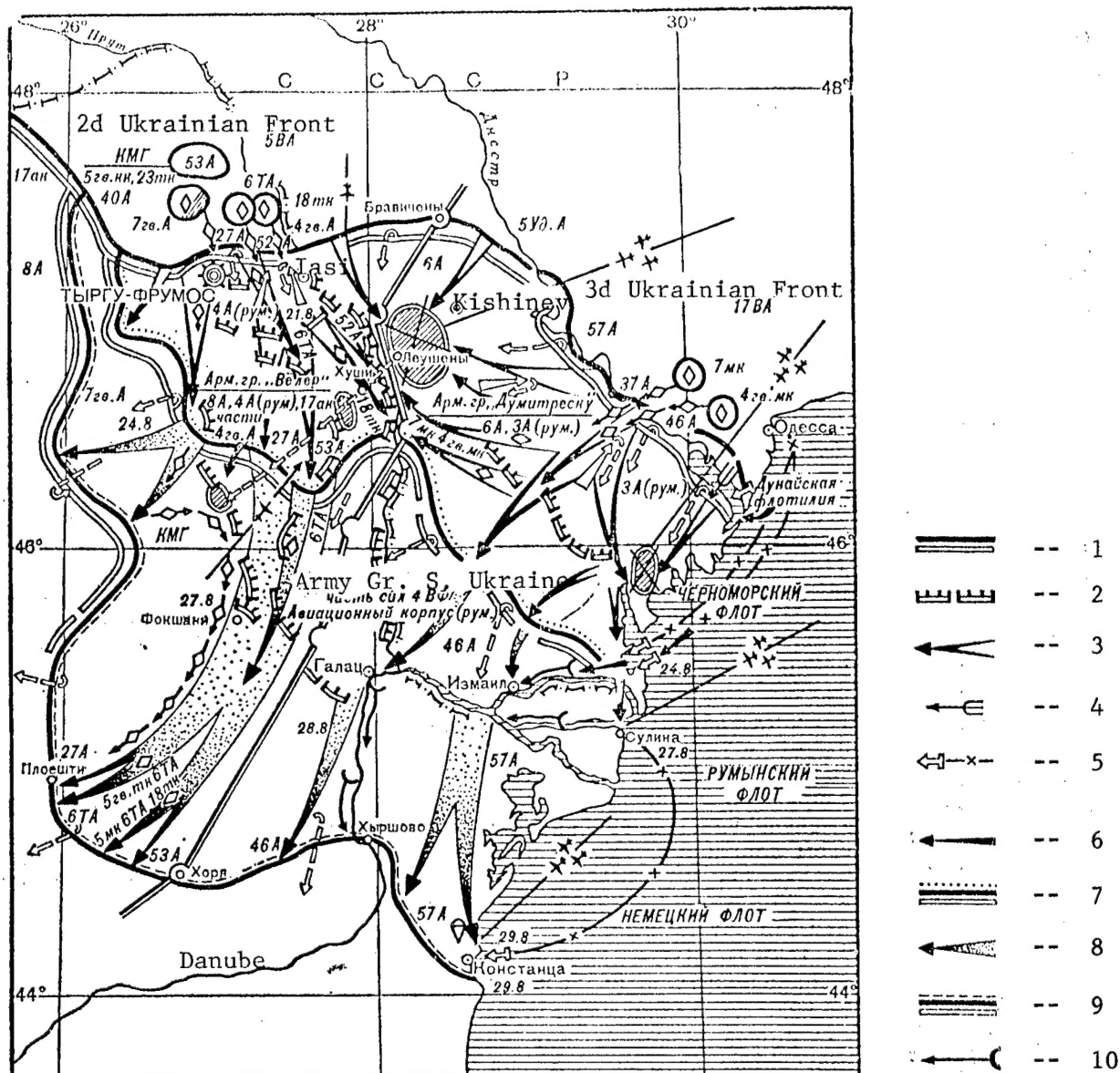
[Article by Professor, Col Gen F. Gayvoronskiy: "Soviet Military Art From the Experience of the Iasi-Kishinev Operation"]

[Text] The Iasi-Kishinev Operation (20-29 August 1944)¹ in terms of its military-political and strategic significance was one of the outstanding operations of the Great Patriotic War.

The defeat of the Nazi Army Group Southern Ukraine had led to the collapse of enemy defenses on the southern wing of the Soviet-German Front and had altered the entire military-political situation in the Balkans. Favorable conditions had been created for the victory of the antifascist armed insurrection of the Romanian people. Romania pulled out of the war on the side of Nazi Germany and on 24 August declared war against it. The further rapid advance by the Soviet troops provided direct aid to the Bulgarian, Yugoslav and Czechoslovak peoples in their liberation struggle. The plans of the Anglo-American leadership to occupy Romania and the other Balkan countries had collapsed.

The Iasi-Kishinev Operation enriched Soviet military art with a number of new concepts in the area of preparing and conducting an offensive by forces of groups of fronts with decisive aims, at a high pace and to a great depth. It has gone down in military history as the most vivid example of the surrounding and defeat of an enemy grouping in a short period of time.

The art of preparing for the operation was primarily apparent in the realisticness and maturity of the scientific planning and in the creative approach of the commanders and staff to working out the overall concept and plan of the operation. The overall concept envisaged the making of two powerful crushing attacks some 200 km apart (see the diagram) by the forces of the Second and Third Ukrainian Fronts in cooperation with the Black Sea Fleet and the Danube Naval Flotilla in order to split the opposing enemy grouping and, in developing the offensive along converging axes toward Husi, to surround and defeat the basic forces of the Army Group Southern Ukraine, to capture the Focsani Gates and advance deep into Romania.² The Black Sea Fleet received the mission of landing amphibious forces in the area of Akkerman (Belgorod-Dnestrovskiy) and on the western coast of the Black Sea, to disrupt the enemy sea lines of communications



The Course of the Iasi-Kishinev Operation, 1944

- Key:
- 1--Front line by end of 19 August
 - 2--Defensive lines of Nazi troops
 - 3--Axis of attacks by Soviet troops, 20-24 August
 - 4--Crossing of the Dniester Estuary, 22 August
 - 5--Routes for the crossing of ships and landing of amphibious forces
 - 6--Breakthrough of ships of Danube Naval Flotilla into Dniester Estuary and Danube Delta
 - 7--Front line by end of 24 August
 - 8--Axis of attacks by Soviet troops, 25-29 August
 - 9--Front line and position of Soviet troops by end of 29 August
 - 10--Operations of Danube Naval Flotilla

and destroy its ships, to make massed air strikes against the Constanta and Sulina bases and with the arrival of the Danube Flotilla on the Danube to assist the ground forces in crossing it.³

The overall concept was marked by exceptional purposefulness and decisiveness. Suffice it to recall that the surrounding of the major enemy strategic grouping, the basic forces of the Army Group Southern Ukraine, the total size of which exceeded 900,000 men, was planned to be carried out in 5 or 6 days. Here the rifle troops were to advance at a pace of 20-25 km a day while the mobile troops would move up to 30-35 km a day.⁴ In the plan of the operation it was envisaged ahead of time that the XVIII Tank Corps of the Second Ukrainian Front and the mechanized corps of the Third Ukrainian Front would operate chiefly on the inner perimeter in the aim of encircling and destroying the enemy while such a powerful attack force of the Second Ukrainian Front as the 6th Tank Army would advance on the external perimeter and push rapidly deep into Romanian territory. This was a further development of the combat experience of the Soviet troops gained in the summer of 1944 in Belorussia.

A major element in preparing the offensive was the choice of the axes of the main thrusts in the operations. The commanders of the fronts and armies during the preparatory period worked extensively and carefully directly in the field in order to finally clarify the axes of the main thrusts and the breakthrough sectors considering the overall plan of Hq SHC [Headquarters, Supreme High Command], the configuration of the front line, as well as the nature of the enemy defenses and grouping and the terrain conditions. The main thrusts were to be made against the weakest points in the defenses: in the area of the Second Ukrainian Front in the interval between two fortified areas (Tirgu Frumos and Iasi) and in the area of the Third Ukrainian Front in the border area of the German and Romanian troops from the Kitskan bridgehead which was swampy and small in size. The given sector was considered unlikely by the enemy command and for this reason the defenses here were weaker than in other sectors of the front. The Soviet Command determined to use this.

In 1944, it had already become a rule that the commanders of the all-arms formations personally in the field determined not only the axes of the main thrust and the breakthrough sectors but also the groupings of men and equipment in the jump-off position, they set the order for fire damage to the enemy and so forth. This trend continued to be developed also in the Iasi-Kishinev Operation.⁵

As experience was to show, the most important condition for a rapid breakthrough of the enemy defenses and achieving a high rate of advance was a deep operational configuration of the troops, the bold massing of men and weapons on the sector of the main thrust, dependable fire damage to the enemy and the skillful employment of tank troops and aviation. In the Iasi-Kishinev Operation, these concepts of military art underwent further development. The Second Ukrainian Front (commander, Army Gen R. Ya. Malinovskiy, military council member Lt Gen Tank Trps I. Z. Susaykov, chief of staff Col Gen M. V. Zakharov) on the axis of the main thrust had two armies (27th and 52d), in the second echelon the 53d Army, and as an echelon for exploiting the success, the mobile troops of the front (the 6th Tank Army and the XVIII Tank Corps), a cavalry-mechanized group [KMG] (the XXIII Tank Corps and the V Guards Cavalry Corps and an all-arms reserve in the form of the XXVII and LVII Tank Corps and special reserves. In the

Third Ukrainian Front (commander, Army Gen F. I. Tolbukhin, military council member Lt Gen A. S. Zheltov and chief of staff Col Gen S. S. Biryuzov), the depth of configuration for the troops was achieved by a double-echelon configuration of the 57th and 37th Armies advancing on the sector of the main thrust of the front, the presence of the front's mobile groups (the IV Guards Mechanized Corps) and the 37th Army (VII Mechanized Corps) as well as an all-arms reserve (the X Guards Rifle Corps). The battle formations of the rifle corps and divisions in both fronts, as a rule, were formed up in two echelons. This ensured the creation on the breakthrough sections of the necessary densities of men and weapons, particularly artillery and tanks, an increase in the might of the attacks in depth and toward the flanks, the rapid progress of the advancing troops and the surrounding and destroying of the major enemy grouping.

The massing of men and weapons on the sectors of the main thrusts was achieved by sharply weakening the other sectors. On the Second Ukrainian Front, in the breakthrough area which was just 5 percent (16 km) of the total length of the front, up to 85 percent of the guns and mortars and up to 76 percent of the tanks and SAU [self-propelled artillery mount] were concentrated. On the Third Ukrainian Front, up to 80-97 percent of the rifle divisions, guns and mortars and up to 100 percent of the tanks and SAU were concentrated on an 18-km sector and this was 7 percent of the total length of the front line. Due to the bold concentration of forces in the sectors of the main thrusts it was possible to create a superiority over the enemy as follows: by 4-8-fold in personnel, by 6-11-fold in artillery and by 6-fold for tanks and SAU. The concentration of a larger portion of the men and weapons by the Soviet Command involved a certain risk. Particularly dangerous was the deploying of the attack grouping of the Third Ukrainian Front on the Kitskan bridgehead (to the south of Bendery). However, the risk was sound and justified. In the breakthrough sectors it made it possible to have 14-17 close support tanks and 30-55 guns set for direct laying with an average of 240 guns and mortars for firing from indirect firing positions per kilometer of front. Such densities under the specific conditions of the situation were optimal and in many ways contributed to the successful breakthrough of the enemy defenses.

Of important significance in preparing for the operation was the *achieving of strategic and operational surprise*. The necessity of reinforcing our troops on the central sector forced the Soviet Command to assign a portion of the forces from the Second and Third Ukrainian Fronts (the 2d and 5th Guards Tank Armies, the 5th and 8th All-Arms Armies and individual artillery and aviation formations) and shift them to the Belorussian and Lvov sectors. It was impossible to completely conceal this from enemy reconnaissance and for this reason the military-political leadership of Nazi Germany felt that the Soviet fronts opposite the Army Group Southern Ukraine, due to the losses suffered in the previous operations and after withdrawing a portion of the formations and field forces from them, had been so weakened that in the immediate future they would be incapable of undertaking any major offensive and if it was started, then only with the limited aim of preventing the moving from Romania of "new German forces" to the central sector of the Soviet-German Front.⁶ For this reason the Nazi Command calmly continued to pull formations from the Army Group Southern Ukraine and shift them to the Belorussian and Lvov sectors. The mistake by the enemy cost it dearly. The offensive by the troops of the Second and Third Ukrainian

Fronts, supported by forces of the Black Sea Fleet (commander, Adm F. S. Oktyabr'skiy, military council member Rear Adm I. I. Azarov and chief of staff Rear Adm I. F. Golubev-Monatkin) and the Danube Naval Flotilla (commander, Rear Adm S. G. Gorshkov), led to the collapse of Nazi defenses and to a sharp change in the military-political and strategic situation on the entire Balkan sector.

Surprise and deception should conceal the axes of the main thrust by the fronts. For this purpose, the Second Ukrainian Front simulated the concentration of a major grouping in the areas of the 40th and 70th Guards Armies fighting a significant distance away from the chosen axis of the main thrust while on the Third Ukrainian Front this was done in the Kishinev sector in the area of the 5th Attack Army. In order to persuade the enemy of the truthfulness of our intentions, from the real concentration areas and from the interior before the onset of darkness tanks, guns and motor vehicles began moving up in the direction of the spurious areas. The impression was created that the basic regroupings were being carried out in darkness. The dummy areas were securely covered by antiaircraft artillery and fighter aviation. All of this made it possible to conceal from the enemy the axes of the main thrusts of the fronts and the scale of the offensive. Just 2 days before the operation, Nazi reconnaissance was able to detect the preparations of the Soviet troops for the offensive but it was too late. With the start of the offensive and even when the enemy defenses had been broken through, the commander of the Army Group Southern Ukraine, Col Gen G. Friesner, continued to expect the main thrust in the Kishinev sector and kept his reserves there. Only on the third day of the operation, after the IV Guards Mechanized Corps had reached Tarutino and turned northwest to Leovo (25 km to the southeast of Husi), did the enemy realize its mistake. By that time the mobile formations of the Second and Third Ukrainian Fronts had pushed rapidly into the enemy rear and soon together with the all-arms armies had completed the encirclement of the 6th German Army and cut it off from the 4th and 3d Romanian Armies.

During the preparation for the operation, all regroupings were carried out in darkness. Here the staffs of all levels showed great organization and efficiency. On the roads and crossings, around-the-clock duty was established by staff officers from the armies and they supervised the march formation of the troops and the observance of the strictest blackout measures; during the day in aircraft they overflew the concentration areas in the aim of checking from the air the camouflage of the troops during halts. The concentrating of the men and weapons assigned for landing was also carefully camouflaged. The concentration of the Danube Flotilla ships at the points for loading the landing force was carried out over 6 days in the observing of all camouflage measures. The landing boats were transported on motor vehicles at night. Immediately after launching they were spread out and carefully camouflaged.

The experience of organizing reconnaissance in preparing for the operation merits attention. This was carried out comprehensively using all resources. The Il-2 ground attack planes were used for aerial photography. The effect of their use surpassed all expectations. The air reconnaissance pilots were able to photograph hundreds of kilometers of enemy defenses along the forward edge and to a significant depth. The unit commanders received excellent panoramic photographs of the areas of advance to a depth of up to 10 km while the tank troop

officers received oblique panoramic photographs of the sectors of their advance.

Hq SHC and the command of the fronts and armies gave primary significance to *organizing fire damage to the enemy*. A new feature in the organizing of artillery softening up on the Second Ukrainian Front (artillery commander, Col Gen Art N. S. Fomin) was the incorporating into the schedule of massed intense shellfire by all the artillery lasting from 5 to 15 minutes each. These were carried out successively: against the enemy lines, the artillery firing positions, and against the command-observation and strongpoints. Here they planned the following: intense shellfire by all artillery, including the large-caliber, at the forward trenches, false shifting of fire and several series of rocket launches in the course of the artillery softening up, as well as the use of antiaircraft guns for intense shelling of the second and third lines of trenches. Calculations showed the high effectiveness of the planned artillery softening up and in this context also the possibility of not using the 5th Air Army in conducting air softening up, using the basic flying time in the course of direct air support for the troops, primarily the tank and mechanized corps, and particularly for the 6th Tank Army in committing it to battle from the line of the Bahlui River.

On the Third Ukrainian Front (artillery commander, Col Gen Art M. I. Nedelin), artillery softening up was planned considering a rigid saving of ammunition. They planned battery fire for 70 minutes (67 percent of the time of artillery softening up) and the making of just three intense shellings. The density of the artillery fire as a whole was low and this required the use of the 17th Air Army in direct air softening up for the attack against the main enemy defensive zone. The support for the infantry and tank attack on this front was provided basically by a single rolling barrage while on the Second Ukrainian Front this was carried out by the method of a double rolling barrage. In contrast to the previous offensive operations, an important role was played by using on both fronts a large number of guns, including the large caliber ones, for firing by direct laying. The creative employment of the artillery and aviation in the aim of fire damage to the enemy contributed largely to the successful carrying out of the set missions.

The enemy defenses were broken through at a rapid pace. The attacks by our artillery and aviation were unstoppable. In a brief period of time the enemy first echelon formations had been crushed, control of them had been lost and a large portion of the weapons neutralized. During interrogation prisoners from the 4th Mountain Rifle Division and the 306th Infantry Division stated that the first salvos of our artillery had knocked out up to 50 percent of the personnel from the subunits in the first trenches.⁸

The first echelon rifle divisions from the 27th Army by 1100 hours had reached the Bahlui River, they crossed it without a halt and captured a bridgehead. Thus, in the middle of the first day of the offensive good conditions were created for committing the front's mobile group, the 6th Tank Army, to combat. On the second day of the operation the 7th Guards Army went over to the offensive. In addition to it, the battle involved: the KMG, the XVIII Tank Corps, the IV Guards Mechanized Corps and the VII Mechanized Corps and certain units from the army second echelons. By the end of the second day of the offensive, the

troops of the Second Ukrainian Front had broadened the breakthrough up to 65 km along the front and had advanced up to 30 km in depth while the Second Ukrainian Front had reached up to 56 km along the front and up to 30 km in depth. As a result of the fierce battles on the sectors of the main thrusts of the fronts, all the enemy first echelon divisions opposing our troops and a portion of the enemy reserves had been crushed. Favorable conditions had been created for rapid operations of the Soviet troops in the operational depth.

The rapid encirclement and elimination of the major highly mobile enemy grouping with the simultaneous rapid advancement on the external perimeter were a distinguishing feature of the given operation. In the encirclement a smaller portion of the troops from both fronts (up to 40 percent) was assigned to establish the inner perimeter of encirclement while the larger one (around 60 percent) formed the external perimeter. For example, on the Second Ukrainian Front the 52d and 4th Guards Army and the XVIII Tank Corps fought on the inner perimeter of encirclement while the 6th Tank Army, the 27th and 53d Armies supported by the main air forces fought on the external perimeter. By the time the encirclement of the enemy was complete, the distance from the inner to external perimeter reached 80-100 km,⁹ and this deprived the enemy of the opportunity of organizing cooperation with its surrounded grouping and the troops fighting on the external perimeter.

Characteristically, the main grouping of enemy troops was surrounded by developing the offensive along convergent axes by the all-arms armies, the tank and mechanized corps of both fronts while the 3d Romanian Army was surrounded and defeated by the 46th Army in cooperation with the Danube Naval Flotilla by outflanking one of the flanks and pressing the enemy troops to the sea.

The destruction of the surrounded grouping was carried out over 4 days by making massed air and artillery strikes, and by splitting up and crushing the enemy formations which endeavored to break out of the encirclement by using tank and rifle attacks. The command and the staffs showed high skill in maneuvering the reserves and in their effective use for destroying the surrounded grouping.¹⁰ Simultaneously with the elimination of the surrounded enemy groupings, the main forces of the Second Ukrainian Front and the left wing of the Third Ukrainian Front continued to advance rapidly deep into Romania. As a result, favorable conditions were created for liberating the Balkan nations and the countries of Southeast Europe.

In the successful execution of the operation a major role was played by the well organized *engineer support*. The engineer troops carried out great work to prepare the jump-off areas, to clear mines, to support the commitment of the mobile troops to battle, in building bridges, including underwater ones (concealed by the water) and erecting crossings. During the preparatory period a well developed system of trenches and communications trenches had been established and shelters for the troops and combat equipment had been built. In the process of preparing for the offensive this made it possible to significantly reduce the losses of personnel from enemy artillery fire and air strikes and to covertly carry out the regrouping and take up the jump-off position. Camouflage nets were widely used to conceal the troops and combat equipment. These were usually set up along roads which could be viewed by the enemy and they also covered trenches, communications trenches, artillery firing positions and

tank emplacements. In the course of the operation the engineer troops supported the crossing of various obstacles and barriers by the units and formations, they organized crossings and built bridges over rivers, thereby ensuring a high rate of advance.

An important factor which determined the success of the operation was the precise organization of cooperation between the ground forces and the forces of the Black Sea Fleet in crossing the Dniester Estuary, in landing amphibious parties and capturing the ports on the Black Sea. The ships of the fleet and the Danube Flotilla as well as the naval aviation assisted the troops of the front in the course of the offensive along the Black Sea coast.

Troop leadership rose to a higher level in comparison with the previous operations. This was characterized by rigid centralization, flexibility and efficiency. The centralization of command and control made it possible for the commanders of the fronts and armies in the course of the operation to quickly regroup the men and weapons and to make mass use of the artillery, tanks, aviation and engineer troops for carrying out the main missions as well as new, suddenly arising tasks related to an abrupt change in the situation (for example, for destroying enemy troops which had broken through into the rear). Centralization did not exclude initiative and creativity on the part of subordinate commanders and chiefs. They, as a rule, quickly sized up the situation, they took bold, original decisions and firmly carried them out. In the difficult situation they did not let initiative slip from their hands and honorably got out of a difficult situation.

The staffs of all levels took all the necessary measures ahead of time to ensure continuous command and control in the course of the operation. Radio and wire communications were organized both with the command as well as the auxiliary (observation) control posts. There was wide use of personal radios for the commanders of the field forces and formations, radio communications over radio links and the establishing of radio nodes and bureaus.

In the breaking through of the enemy defenses and in the committing of mobile groups to an engagement, the commanders usually were at observation posts with the commanders of the cooperating field forces and formations (or their representatives) with the operations groups and communications with them or nearby.

The commanders of the field forces, formations and units and the staff workers personally followed the combat operations of the troops, and worked for the coordinated and most effective employment of them in breaking through the enemy defenses and developing the offensive. In accord with the developing situation they effectively adjusted the missions for subordinates. For accelerating the collecting of situational data, the staffs of the fronts in a number of instances sent their officers directly to the armies and divisions. Under particularly difficult conditions, the commander of the front with his operations group traveled to an army observation or command post and on the spot took a decision and set the missions for the troops.

It must be emphasized that the crucial factor ensuring success in the operation was the high political-moral state of the personnel, the total bravery and steadfastness of the soldiers and officers, their unshakable belief in victory,

the increased level of military art of the commanders and the teamwork of the troops and staffs. These accomplishments were the result of the extensive daily party-political work and combat training in the troops and on the staffs both during the period of preparing for the operation as well as in the course of combat operations. The communists were examples of valor, military courage, skill and prowess and they ensured the high organization, discipline and battleworthiness of the subunits, units and formations.

The Iasi-Kishinev Operation made a major contribution to the development of Soviet military art and many of its tenets have kept their importance under present-day conditions. The high level of the military art of the commanders and staffs was apparent primarily in the skillful choice of the axes of the main thrusts, in the bold massing of men and weapons on the selected sectors and in the covert concentration of the troops.

Equally important was the experience of rapidly encircling and eliminating a major enemy grouping by a part of the advancing troops with the simultaneous development of an offensive by the main forces on the external perimeter. This forced the enemy to retreat deep into its territory and did not allow it to stabilize the front for a long time.

The tank and mechanized troops played a crucial role in surrounding the enemy grouping to the east of the Prut River and in developing the offensive on the external perimeter. The tank army (the front's mobile group) was committed to battle on the first day in the aim of completing the breakthrough of the tactical zone and the subsequent rapid advance deep into Romanian territory.

The experience of the operation clearly showed that its success depended largely upon the dependability and depth of fire damage to the enemy, upon the organizing and constant maintaining of precise cooperation of all the involved resources, and upon the stability and effectiveness of troop control and command.

FOOTNOTES

¹ For the Iasi-Kishinev Operation, see: "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945" [The History of World War II of 1939-1945], Moscow, Voenizdat, Vol 9, 1978, pp 97-109; "Istoriya Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny Sovetskogo Soyuza 1941-1945" [History of the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union of 1941-1945], Moscow, Voenizdat, Vol 4, 1962, pp 254-275; "Operatsii Sovetskikh Vooruzhennykh Sil v Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne 1941-1945" [Operations of the Soviet Armed Forces in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945], Moscow, Voenizdat, Vol 3, 1958, pp 437-500; "Sovetskaya Voyennaya Entsiklopediya" [Soviet Military Encyclopedia], Moscow, Voenizdat, Vol 8, 1980, pp 674-676; "Yassko-Kishinevskiy Kanny" [Iasi-Kishinev Cannae], Moscow, Nauka, 1964; VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 8, 1964, pp 3-47, 86-94; No 8, 1974, pp 3-10, 45-57.

² TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 243, inv. 267012, file 14, sheet 156; folio 132-A, inv. 2642, file 36, sheets 435-448.

- ³ "Yassko-Kishinevskiye Kanny," p 60.
- ⁴ "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy...", Vol 9, p 101.
- ⁵ TsAMO, folio 243, inv. 267012, file 14, sheet 156.
- ⁶ "Yassko-Kishinevskiye Kanny," p 103.
- ⁷ TsAMO, folio 243, inv. 267012, file 14, sheet 174.
- ⁸ Ibid., inv. 2900, file 1102, sheets 229-230.
- ⁹ "Operatsii Sovetskikh Vooruzhennykh...", Vol 3, pp 497-498.
- ¹⁰ In the course of the Iasi-Kishinev Operation, 22 German divisions were destroyed and virtually all the Romanian divisions on the fronts were routed.

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ARTILLERY, AIR BREAKTHROUGH OF ENEMY DEFENSES IN WORLD WAR II TRACED

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 8, Aug 84 (signed to press 24 Jul 84) pp 18-23

[Article by Candidate of Military Sciences, Docent, Col Gen M. Sidorov: "Fire Damage in Breaking Through Enemy Defenses From the Experience of the Great Patriotic War"]

[Text] The experience of the Great Patriotic War showed that the most difficult stage in offensive operations was the breaking through of the prepared enemy defenses. Its success depended largely upon the effectiveness of fire damage to the defending enemy grouping and its installations (targets).

In the offensive operations conducted by the Soviet troops during the period of the 1941 summer-autumn campaign, as a rule, not enough attention was paid to organizing fire damage to the enemy in breaking through its defenses. In the period of preparing for an offensive, the artillery and air staffs basically limited themselves to general instructions, they permitted the scattering of artillery and air efforts over many directions and the densities of the men and weapons involved in fire damage to the enemy were low. Little attention was paid to organizing reconnaissance of enemy installations (targets). All of this ultimately led to a situation where the degree of their damage was low.

With the going over of the Soviet Army to a counteroffensive at Moscow and then in the general offensive on the Western strategic sector, the enemy began more frequently to organize not a focal but rather a positional defense along a solid front, the breaking through of which without effective and dependable neutralization and destruction of its weapons and other installations represented a very complex problem. It could only be resolved by skillful organization of reconnaissance, by massing artillery, aviation, tanks and other weapons on the breakthrough areas and improving the methods of their combat employment.

The basic efforts of all types of reconnaissance in preparing for the offensive operation were aimed at obtaining reliable information on the defending enemy grouping and on the position of its weapons and defensive works. The most effective for reconnoitering enemy defenses to their entire tactical depth were artillery reconnaissance and observation and air reconnaissance and their resources were continuously increased. Thus, while in the counteroffensive at Stalingrad the Don Front had just 3 separate artillery reconnaissance battalions (orad) and

1 separate air spotter squadron (okae), in the Leningrad-Novgorod Operation the Leningrad Front had 6 orad, 3 okae and 2 observation balloon battalions (vdan) while in the Belorussian, Vistula-Oder and Berlin Offensive Operations the First Belorussian Front, in addition to the regulation troop artillery reconnaissance units, had from 7 to 16 orad, 2 vdan and 2 separate air spotter-reconnaissance regiments (okrap). It must be pointed out that up to 85 percent of the artillery reconnaissance resources were concentrated in the armies advancing on the sector of the front's main thrust. This made it possible, for example, to have in the areas of the field forces a rather high density of artillery reconnaissance and observation means equal to 4 or 5 km per reconnaissance battalion.

As combat experience was gained and the artillery reconnaissance equipment increased in the operational army, the enemy objects and targets were reconnoitered more fully. For example, while by the start of the defeat of the enemy grouping surrounded at Stalingrad by the troops of the Don Front, in the defense areas around 1,500 weapons and defensive works had been reconnoitered, by the start of the Berlin Offensive Operation in the sector of the main thrust of the First Belorussian Front, reconnaissance had discovered 2,266 basic objects. In the period of preparing for the Vistula-Oder Operation, the artillery reconnaissance forces on all three of the designated breakthrough sectors had discovered and determined the coordinates of 468 artillery and mortar batteries, 57 antiaircraft batteries, 1,480 separate firing points, 245 log emplacements, 406 covered trenches and 154 observation posts.¹

In the preparations for and in the course of offensive operations involving the breakthrough of enemy defenses, great attention was given to air reconnaissance. The number of aircraft sorties for these purposes during the war continuously increased. While on the front-level offensive operations of 1941-1942 as a daily average 10 aircraft sorties were made for air reconnaissance to break through the defenses, in the operations of the 1942-1943 winter campaign the figure was 13.8 aircraft sorties, in the summer-autumn of 1943 it was 51.3, in the operations conducted in the winter of 1944-1945, 62.2 and in the spring of 1945, 92.5.²

As a whole the skillfully and effectively organized reconnaissance made it possible by the start of an offensive operation to reconnoiter from 47 to 63 percent of the weapons, defensive works and other enemy objects. The presence of reliable reconnaissance data provided an opportunity to specifically plan and carry out fire damage to the enemy in breaking through its defenses.

One of the most important conditions for increasing fire damage to the enemy in breaking through its defenses was *massing artillery, tanks and SAU [self-propelled artillery mount] on the breakthrough sectors and utilizing large masses of bomber and ground attack aviation for striking the enemy.*

Flexible maneuvering and massing of the means for fire damage to the enemy, the main ones being artillery and aviation, during the period of preparing and conducting offensive operations with a piercing of the enemy defenses were carried out not only on a tactical and operational but also a strategic scale. Extensive maneuvering and the high art of massing weapons ensured their decisive concentration for dependable fire damage to the enemy.

Due to the decisive maneuvering of the RVGK [Reserve of the Supreme High Command] artillery as well as within the fronts, armies and divisions, the Soviet Command massed in the breakthrough sectors up to 50-60 percent of the guns, mortars and rocket launchers from all those involved in the operation in the operations of 1941-1942 and up to 70-90 percent in the subsequent ones.³ The massing of artillery was most clearly apparent in establishing the required artillery densities in the breakthrough sectors which during the war years constantly increased. While in the offensive operations of 1941-1942, the operational densities in the breakthrough sectors reached 70-80 guns and mortars of 76-mm and higher caliber per kilometer of front, in 1943 the figure was 130-200, in 1944, 150-250 and in 1945, the figure reached 250-300.⁴

The massing of artillery and its flexible command and control in the offensive operations in breaking through the defenses to a large degree depended upon the artillery grouping. While up to 1943, the artillery groups were basically organized according to the type of missions to be carried out and there were no clearly defined groups in the hands of the all-arms commanders, in 1943 and in the first half of 1944, there was a search for new forms for an artillery grouping. During this period there was a tendency in organizing the artillery groups to give them greater conformity to the combat conditions, in breaking through the defenses to provide closer cooperation of the artillery with the infantry and tanks and to promptly carry out the tasks which had been set by the all-arms commanders. The groups were established in all the all-arms elements from the regiment to the army, inclusively. This made it possible for the all-arms commanders to more effectively influence the course of combat (operation) by the artillery means at their disposal. But still the work of improving the grouping was far from complete. The artillery groups in many ways were closer to general-purpose groups. But still the strength of the groups, their number and length of actions had not been set. Only in the second half of 1944 was a new artillery grouping finally organized along organizational and tactical lines. The main condition for its establishing was to bring the artillery as close as possible to the supported all-arms formations and units. As before, artillery groups were organized in the rifle regiments, divisions, corps and armies and they were subordinate to their commanders. Such an organization excluded intermediate elements in the command and control of the artillery and significantly reduced the number of groups under a single commander.

As for aviation, during the first period of the war it to a significant degree was scattered over the all-arms armies and massed on the main sectors. The organization of air armies in 1942 and the subordinating of them to the front commanders made it possible to improve the massing of the air forces and the planning of their combat employment in the sectors of the main thrusts. The commanders of the fronts obtained a powerful means for supporting the attack troop grouping while the planning of operations for the air army became an inseparable part of the overall plan for the offensive operation. In the offensive operations of the second period already up to 70-75 percent of all the forces of the air armies were concentrated on the sectors of the main thrusts and in the third period, the figure was 90-95 percent.

An important area for increasing the effectiveness of fire damage to the enemy in breaking through its defenses was improving the methods for the combat employment of artillery and aviation.

The first offensive operations of the Great Patriotic War showed that an even allocation of artillery, the conducting of artillery fire chiefly just before the infantry and tank attack and employing the principle of echeloning the aviation and making strikes against the enemy in small groups of airplanes did not ensure the full carrying out of the missions for fire damage to the enemy in breaking through the defenses and led to protracted battles and a reduced rate of advance. For this reason in the Directive Letter of Hq SHC of 10 January 1942 on organizing the breakthrough of defenses, it was emphasized that the artillery should operate not scattered out but rather concentrated and destroy the enemy objectives not only during the period of the artillery softening up of the attack but also in the course of breaking the entire enemy defenses. The letter demanded a switching from the practice of artillery softening up to an artillery offensive.⁵ This meant that the artillery should not only prepare for the infantry and tank attack but also advance with them, ensuring the breaking through of enemy defenses to their entire depth by continuous firing. A further concretizing and detailing of the provisions on an artillery offensive were provided in the Infantry field manual (BUP-42) issued in November 1942. This document in greater detail disclosed the essence of an artillery offensive, it determined its periods and indicated the missions of the artillery and the ways for carrying them out. The manual envisaged three periods of an artillery offensive: the artillery softening up for the attack, artillery support for the attack and artillery support for infantry and tank operations in combat deep in the enemy defenses.

An artillery offensive was carried out for the first time in breaking through the enemy defenses on the Lama River in January 1942. Artillery fire destroyed almost 50 percent of the enemy log emplacements, it neutralized 20 mortar and 8 artillery batteries and destroyed a significant number of Nazi soldiers and officers. However, the demands of the Directive of Hq SHC had not been fully carried out here. This concerned chiefly the third period. The Soviet Command planned and carried out an artillery offensive most completely in the counter-offensive at Stalingrad. From that time it became a permanent feature in the combat employment of artillery.

The duration and organization of the first period of an artillery offensive were determined chiefly by the nature of the enemy defenses, by the density of its men and weapons and by the availability of artillery and ammunition for the advancing troops. The duration of the artillery softening up for the attack did not exceed, as a rule, one or two hours and depended upon the time necessary for the dependable hitting of the objects planned for the artillery. This was carried out by massed and concentrated fire to the entire tactical depth of enemy defenses combined with the firing of guns assigned to fire with direct laying against targets on the forward edge. It is wise to point out that the number of such guns during the war years constantly grew. While in the operations of 1941-1942, basically the battalion and regimental artillery was employed for firing by direct laying with a density not over 8-15 guns per kilometer of front, in 1943-1945, for this they began to employ artillery of all calibers, including high-powered guns. The density rose to 25-36 guns per kilometer of front.⁶

In those instances when the enemy defenses had particularly strong works which could not be destroyed during the period of artillery softening up, for the

purposes of shortening the latter, a so-called preliminary destruction period was designated.

The artillery softening up, as a rule, commenced and terminated with strong intense shellfire. Between these were periods of destruction and neutralization of enemy targets. In certain instances, the artillery softening up was carried out in the form of a single strong intense shellfire lasting 20-25 minutes (the First Belorussian Front in the Berlin and Vistula-Oder Operations). With an overall trend to shorten the length of artillery softening up during the war years, the duration of the intense shellfire increased. Thus, the time of the first intense shellfire increased from 3-5 minutes in 1941-1943 up to 10-25 minutes in 1944-1945, while the time of the intense shellfire carried out at the end of the artillery softening up grew, respectively, from 5-10 to 15-25 minutes. The surprise opening of heavy density fire in carrying out intense shellfire significantly increased the effectiveness of hitting the enemy installations.⁷ Here the greatest losses were caused to the Nazis in the main defensive area. In major offensive operations during the third period of the war, within it an average of 50-60 percent of the enemy weapons and personnel was hit.⁸ The depth of the simultaneous neutralization of the defenses also increased in the course of the artillery softening up. While in the operations of 1941-1942 it was 2.5-5 km, in 1945 it was 8-10 km and in individual instances 15 km.

During the first period of an artillery offensive, major importance was given to the countering of enemy artillery. The neutralizing and destruction of the enemy batteries usually commenced simultaneously with the artillery softening up for the attack by making intense shellfire.

The support for the infantry and tank attack was carried out by successive methods such as successive fire concentration (PSO), a single or double rolling barrage and a combination of these two types of fire. With focal enemy defenses the amount of artillery involved and the limit on ammunition consumption were basically small. In such an instance most often the PSO method was employed. With the transition of the enemy to trench defenses and the increased density of our artillery and ammunition consumption, along with the PSO, a single rolling barrage began to be employed. As of 1944, an attack was supported by a double or single rolling barrage combined with PSO. Combat practice showed that the most effective method for supporting an attack in breaking through the strongly developed enemy defenses was the double rolling barrage.

The support of the infantry and tanks in fighting in depth was carried out by combining fire and maneuver of the individual guns of the platoons and batteries in the battle formations of the attacking subunits with combined fire of the artillery battalions and groups against the detected enemy artillery and mortar batteries and other major enemy defensive objectives.⁹

In the aim of providing continuous support for the infantry and tanks with massed and effective air fire, an air offensive was introduced. This included two periods: the preparation for the attack and the support of the attack and the infantry and tank actions deep in the enemy defenses. The first attempt at organizing and partially carrying out an air offensive in breaking through the defenses was made in the counteroffensive at Stalingrad. In the offensive

operations during the winter 1942-1943 campaign, this was carried out fully to the breakthrough depth of the entire defensive tactical zone and with the start of the counteroffensive at Kursk to the entire depth of the operation. In breaking through fortified areas, in addition to direct air softening up, there was also preliminary air softening up usually commencing 1-3 days prior to the start of the offensive.

Air softening up was carried out in the aim of neutralizing the enemy troops and weapons in the breakthrough sectors, destroying centers of resistance and strongpoints and disrupting troop command and control. The main objects to be struck for the aviation were: enemy personnel in the assembly areas, defensive fortifications on the first and second defensive lines, guns and mortars firing positions, command posts, staffs and communications centers. Air softening up was carried out either before the start of artillery softening up or simultaneously with it, but with the compulsory coordinating of artillery and air efforts in terms of place, time and objectives of actions. With a simultaneous artillery and air softening up, the artillery units and formations neutralized and destroyed objectives on the first position of the main defensive zone while the aviation units hit the second and third positions of the main zone as well as the second defensive zone.

Air support for the ground troops in breaking through the defenses was one of the difficult air missions. The methods for organizing and carrying this out were continuously improved. While in the operations of the first period of the war air support was limited to individual sporadic attacks against targets with small groups of ground attack planes and bombers, in the second and third periods this began to be carried out continuously by heavy bomb and fire attacks on enemy installations both directly ahead of the attacking troops as well as against targets in depth (in the operations of 1944-1945).

In addition to artillery and aviation which were the basic means for fire damage to the enemy in breaking through its defenses, the enemy suffered tangible losses from the rifle troops and the armored and mechanized troops which advanced together with them.

The increased effectiveness in destroying and neutralizing the Nazi personnel and firing points by infantry weapons was achieved due to the constant increase in the number of automatic weapons in the rifle subunits and the incorporating of artillery in their TOE.

In conclusion, it should be pointed out that the effectiveness of fire damage in breaking through the enemy defenses increased from operation to operation. For example, while in the Stalingrad Operation over the 23 days the artillery of both armies of the Don Front hit 7,609 targets, in the Bobruysk Operation of the First Belorussian Front some 7,485 different targets were hit and neutralized in just 6 days and in the Berlin Operation of the First Belorussian Front during the first 2 days of the offensive the artillery destroyed, ruined and neutralized around 4,600 various targets, not counting the destroyed personnel, many kilometers of destroyed trenches and hundreds of centers of resistance established in stone buildings.

The high effectiveness of fire damage to the enemy ensured the successful breaking through of the enemy defenses and the rapid development of the offensive.

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ "Sbornik materialov po izucheniyu opyta voyny" [Collection of Materials on Studying the Experience of the War], Moscow, Voenizdat, No 25, 1947, p 96.
- ² TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 35, inv. 73965, file 4, sheet 47.
- ³ G. Ye. Peredel'skiy, A. I. Tokmakov and G. T. Khoroshilov, "Artilleriya v boyu i operatsii" [Artillery in a Battle and an Operation], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1980, p 25.
- ⁴ "50 let Sovetskoy artillerii" [Fifty Years of Soviet Artillery], Leningrad, Izd. Artilleriyskoy akademii imeni M. I. Kalinina, 1968, p 96; "Sovetskaya artilleriya v Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne 1941-1945 gg." [Soviet Artillery in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1960, p 752.
- ⁵ "Sbornik boyevykh dokumentov po izucheniyu opyta voyny" [Collection of Combat Documents on Studying the Experience of the War], Moscow, Izd. Upravleniya izucheniya opyta voyny General'nogo shtaba, No 5, 1947, p 9.
- ⁶ "Operatsii Sovetskikh Vooruzhennykh Sil v Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne 1941-1945 gg." [Operations of the Soviet Armed Forces in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945], Moscow, Voenizdat, Vol IV, 1959, p 827.
- ⁷ "Sovetskaya artilleriya v Velikoy...", p 757.
- ⁸ TsAMO, folio 38, inv. 80046, file 114, sheet 168.
- ⁹ "Sovetskaya artilleriya v Velikoy...", p 758; "Sovetskaya Voyennaya Entsiklopediya" [Soviet Military Encyclopedia], Vol 1, p 271.

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WORLD WAR II: ORGANIZATION, SUPPORT OF TANK MARCHES DESCRIBED

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 8, Aug 84 (signed to press 24 Jul 84) pp 24-31

[Article by Honored Scientist of the RSFSR, Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor, Maj Gen I. Krupchenko: "The Organization and Execution of Marches by Tank and Mechanized Formations During the Years of the Great Patriotic War"]

[Text] The establishing of troop groupings on selected sectors, the shifting of the main efforts from one sector to another and a sharp change in the situation in the course of the operation--all of this, as a rule, led to the need to regroup the troops and this in a majority of instances involved carrying out a march.

The experience of the Great Patriotic War has shown that most frequently marches were made by formations of tank and mechanized troops which comprised the main attack and maneuvering force of the Ground Forces. There was virtually not a single offensive or defensive operation during the preparation or in the course of which the tank (mechanized) corps and brigades did not move over a distance of 100 and more kilometers.

The tank and mechanized formations moved by three methods: under their own power (by a march), by rail and a combination of these. In the last instance a portion of the combat and special vehicles, chiefly the wheeled ones, traveled under their own power while the heavy equipment (tanks and SAU [self-propelled artillery mount]) were moved by rail. Rail shipment and the combined method for moving the tank troops were ordinarily employed during the period of preparing for an operation. Thus, in March 1944, in preparing for the Proskorovo-Chernovtsy Operation, the corps of the 1st Guards Tank Army were regrouped from the area of Kazatin, Berdichev to the region of Shepetovka by the combined method. All the wheeled vehicles carried out a march over a distance of 200-250 km on their own power. The tanks and disabled vehicles were moved by rail.¹ A second example of the combined method for moving troops was the moving up of the corps of the 6th Guards Tank Army to the area of Choybalsan in July 1945. All the vehicles carried out a march of 800-1,000 km under their own power. The tanks and SAU were transported by rail as far as the city of Choybalsan. The subsequent move to the area of Tamtsag-Bulak over a distance of 300-400 km was carried out by all the combat equipment in a march under own power.²

Table

Certain Indicators for Marches by Tank and Mechanized Corps
During the Years of the Great Patriotic War*

Corps No.	Time of March	Length of March (km)	Average Daily Move (km)
XXIX TC	6-9 July 1943	380	120
XVIII TC	"	380	120
VI Gds. TC	27-30 October 1943	140	70
IX MC	"	140	70
III TC	4-5 February 1944	120	120
VII Gds. TC	22-23 July 1944	120	120
IX MC	"	120	120
X Gds. TC	12-15 August 1944	150	50
VI Gds. MC	"	150	50
IX Gds. MC	2-3 December 1944	100	70
VIII Gds. MC	3-4 February 1945	100	70
III Gds. TC	12-14 April 1945	240	120
VIII Gds. TC	14-15 April 1945	300	200
X Gds. TC	3-6 May 1945	200	70
V Gds. TC	22-24 July 1945	340	110
VII MC	"	350	120

* "Stroitel'stvo i boyevoye primeneniye sovetskikh tankovykh voysk v gody Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny" [Organizational Development and Combat Employment of Soviet Tank Troops During the Years of the Great Patriotic War], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1979, pp 250, 251, 253.

The tank and mechanized formations carried out a march, as a rule, under difficult situational conditions, under constant action by enemy aviation, over significantly destroyed roads and frequently under the threat of encountering the enemy.

In a predominant majority of cases, the marches of the tank and mechanized corps were made at night. Daytime moves were very rare and were ordinarily carried out in those instances when the efforts of the advancing troops had to be shifted to a new sector. As an example, one might give the march of the corps of the 1st Guards Tank Army in July 1944 in the course of the Lwow-Sandomierz Operation.³

The distance of the daily move of the columns was determined by the specific situation, by the condition of the routes, and by the training level of the drivers to make long distance marches. To a significant degree this also depended upon the weather and the time of day. Thus, in May 1945, the VI and VII Guards Tank Corps, in carrying out a march during the day and at night under good climatic and road conditions, over a period of 24 hours covered a distance of 120-130 km. In another instance, with constant rain and bad roads, the V Guards Tank Corps and the IX Guards Mechanized Corps, in making a march on 25-29 September 1944, in 24 hours covered a distance not exceeding 80 km. These same formations, having set out on 20 October 1944 on an alert march and in moving over a paved highway, in 12 hours covered 110 km.

With a forced march (12-14 hours of travel), the amount of the daily move reached 120-150 km. As an example one might give the march carried out by the corps of the 6th Guards Tank Army from the area of Choybalsan to the area of Tamtsag-Bulak. On each of the first 2 days they covered 100-110 km and on the third day 120-135 km.

The Great Patriotic War showed that the success of a march depended largely upon the carefulness and completeness of its organization. However, the corps commanders and the staffs, as a rule, had very limited time for preparing for the march running from several hours to a day. For example, the commander and staff of the 2d Tank Army in the Korsun-Shevchenkovskiy Operation had 3 or 4 hours to organize a march on 4-5 February 1944. The corps of the 1st Guards Tank Army in the Vistula-Oder Operation were given 10 hours to organize the march of 3-4 February 1945. The V Guards Tank Corps and the IX Guards Mechanized Corps of the 6th Guards Tank Army in the Debrecen Operation of 20 October 1944 began to carry out the march upon receiving the alert. The III Tank Corps in the Korsun-Shevchenkovskiy Operation, also alerted at 1500 hours on 26 January 1944, in 2 hours began moving to the new concentration area.⁴

Considering the limited time for organizing the march, the corps commanders in their decisions set primarily the configuration of the march formation, the time for passing the starting line and the report lines, the probable line (area) of encountering the enemy, and designated measures to organize troop control on the march. With sufficient time available the decision was taken considering the reconnaissance data on the route of march but with limited time, then only from a map.

The method of giving the missions to subordinates also depended upon the situation. With the necessary time and a favorable situation, the corps (brigade) commanders personally announced their plan and set the tasks for the march. For this the commanders of the formations (units), the staff officers and the chiefs of the branches of troops and services were summoned to the staff or to the command post. If this could not be done because of a lack of time, the plan was announced only to the chiefs of the corps staff departments and to the chiefs of the services and through them or liaison officers was issued to the commanders of the subordinate formations and units.

Often hurry in organizing a march told negatively on its results. In this regard, very indicative was the experience of the movement of the corps from the 2d Tank Army to the area of Fatezh in February 1943. In organizing the

march the routes had not been inspected, a traffic control service had not been organized, there actually was no technical maintenance echelon and little supplies of fuel and lubricants had been brought along. As a result, the army formations reached the assembly area 2-3 days late with around 130 tanks, almost 30 percent of them, remaining along the route.⁵

The basic document which was worked out during preparations was the march plan. This indicated: the goal of the march, the routes of travel and halt areas, a calculation for the movement of the troops and rear services in terms of place and time for each unit (formation), the traffic control methods, the questions of organizing air and antitank defenses, the procedure for supplying the troops and the organization of communications.

The tank and mechanized corps carried out a march, as a rule, along a single route. Here the march formation was organized in a single march column which was split up into several echelons. Each echelon included a reinforced tank or motorized-rifle (mechanized) brigade capable of fighting independently in encountering the enemy. The length of the march formation for a corps was usually 60-70 km. If during the march the possibility of encountering the enemy was excluded, the columns in the echelons were made up, as a rule, of uniform (wheeled or tracked) vehicles, with the tanks and SAU moving usually behind the wheeled vehicle columns.⁶ In an instance when an encounter with a ground enemy was expected, a forward detachment was usually sent out from the tank (mechanized) corps in order to anticipate the enemy in capturing and holding important objects or lines and thereby ensure good conditions for the concentration or deployment of the formation's main forces. A reinforced tank (mechanized) brigade in a majority of instances operated as the corps forward detachment.

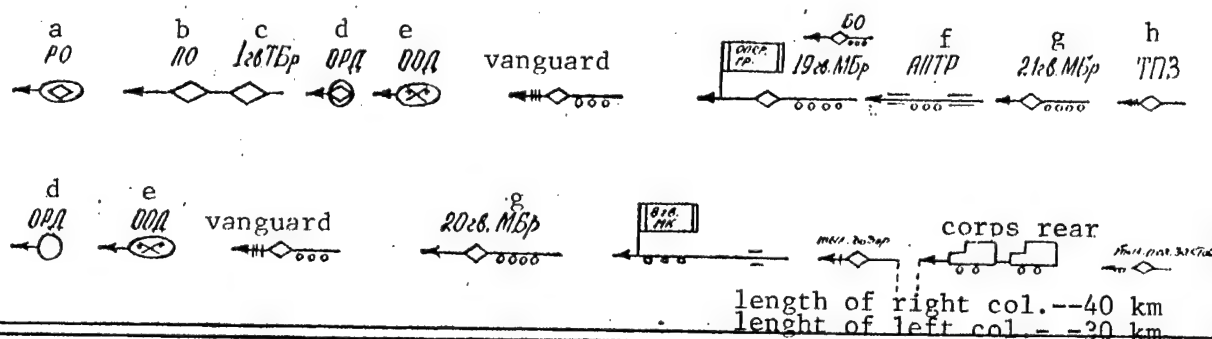
In the course of a march, for the units and formations of the tank and mechanized corps, halts were designated for the technical inspection of the equipment and for the resting of the personnel: the first halt lasting 20-30 minutes an hour after the start of movement, and a second 3 hours later. After 5-6 hours of movement a halt was ordered lasting 1 or 2 hours. Large halts (3 or 4 hours) were set in making forced marches.

The place of the corps commander and staff in a march was chosen so as to provide best contact with the troops. Usually the corps commander with a group of staff officers and communications equipment moved at the head of the column of main forces. The corps staff always moved by echelons. The basic portion of the staff headed by its chief traveled, as a rule, either behind the first echelon or at the head of one of the columns of the second echelon ready to deploy the command post. A portion of the staff officers was assigned to lead the traffic control service and monitoring the carrying out of the march plan by the troops. In making a march, when an encounter with a ground enemy was not envisaged, the corps commanders with a group of staff officers, after inspecting the readiness of the troops to make the move and sometimes after the setting out of the column on the road, usually drove to the new concentration area for greeting the troops there and organizing forthcoming combat. Under these conditions the basic staff forces were moved ahead of time to the new concentration area while the remainder stayed in the former area for supervising the departure of the columns.

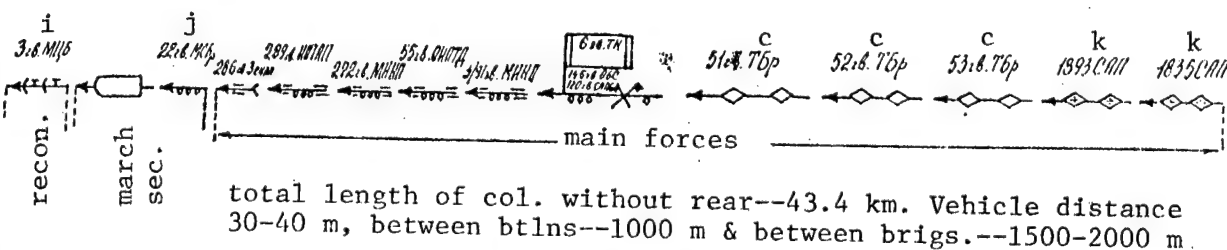
The basic means of communications in the course of a march was the liaison aircraft, cross-country vehicles and motorcycles. Communications by mobile means was carried out through report collection points which were organized on all the routes. Radios on a march were used for transmitting signals. In all other instances, they operated just for receiving.

In organizing a march, great attention was given to reconnaissance. The composition and number of reconnaissance subunits were basically determined by the combat conditions, by the nature of the terrain and by the importance of the direction of movement. For conducting reconnaissance, reconnaissance detachments or reconnaissance groups consisting of from a company to a battalion were sent out from the main forces. They were 20-40 km away from the march security bodies.

Formation of VIII Mech. Corps in Moving from Assembly Area to Starting One
16 Jul 44



March Formation of VI Guards Tank Corps on 29 Oct 43



- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Key: a--Reconnaissance detachment | h--Rear security detachment |
| b--March security | i--Guards motorcycle battalion |
| c--Guards tank brigade | j--Guards motorized-rifle brigade |
| d--Separate reconnaissance battalion | k--Self-propelled artillery regiment |
| e--Movement support detachment | |
| f--Antitank artillery reserve | |
| g--Guards mechanized brigade | |

Troop security on a march was also organized depending upon the specific situation in which the march was made and here they considered the distance of the troops from the front line and the direction of the march. Thus, in making a march to the front, the main forces of a tank (mechanized) corps were protected by a vanguard consisting of from a reinforced battalion up to a brigade. In moving along a front toward the side of a threatened flank, flank detachments were sent out (up to a reinforced battalion). If a tank (mechanized) corps was making a march from the front to the rear, the columns were guarded by rear guards which were sent out toward the enemy a distance of 10 km away and by flank guards or patrols while in the direction of the movement there was direct security.

The experience of the Great Patriotic War showed that air defense was to be an important measure to carry out a march. This was provided by organizing air observation and warning and by establishing a fire plan for antiaircraft artillery weapons and small arms fire. In a number of instances the columns on a march were covered by attached fighter aviation. The small-caliber antiaircraft artillery attached to the corps usually traveled at the head of the columns of the main forces or behind the vanguards while the medium-caliber antiaircraft artillery covered chiefly the troops at crossings or during the daytime rest.

The tasks of antitank defense on a march were carried out by organizing observation and warning of the appearance of enemy tanks, by ensuring constant readiness of the troops to repel their attacks, by the skillful allocation of antitank artillery weapons over the columns and their correct employment, by establishing antitank reserves and by the prompt laying of mixed minefields on likely tank approaches. For combating enemy tanks, tanks and SAU were used primarily as well as artillery and other antitank weapons of the motorized units and formations.

The successful execution of marches by the tank and mechanized formations was largely aided by the skillful organization of engineer support which included: conducting engineer reconnaissance of the routes, halt areas, the daytime (nighttime) rest and troop assembly areas, the engineer equipping of them as well as camouflage measures.

The traffic control service was of great importance on a march as its basic mission was to control the movement of the troops. For this purpose a system of checkpoints was established. Without fail these were set up at the starting lines (areas), in the halt and daytime rest areas, at the intersections of roads and at bridges as well as at the lines for the end of night travel. As an average one checkpoint consisting of two or three men was set out for every 6-8 km of route. With two routes of 150 km, 36-50 checkpoints were required including 10-14 traffic control points.

The marches by tank and mechanized corps were carried out more successfully with a centralized traffic control service system which was organized by the superior staff (tank army staff). In this instance the entire zone of the march was broken up into individual traffic control sections some 30-40 km long. A staff officer from the army or corps was appointed the section commandant. On each section, in addition to the ordinary five or six traffic control points, at the

most crucial points of the route (bridges, crossings, road narrows and defiles), officer points were set out. Considering the small size of the regular commandant subunits (commandant platoons under the corps staff) which were usually responsible for staff security, for standing traffic control service on the routes they used, as a rule, rifle, combat engineer and motorcycle subunits. In certain instances mobile control was employed (groups of controllers with the necessary equipment were sent out and control was organized jointly with the move support detachments). Sometimes controlling employed leap-frogging (the establishing of several control detachments each of which controlled traffic on a certain section of the route, then moving to the other section assigned to it).

In making marches over long distances, the checkpoints were set out only on the starting line and in the assembly areas. In these instances, the men in charge of the vehicles were supplied with detailed diagrams of the routes.

An important task in making a march was to ensure its concealment and this was achieved by carrying out a whole series of camouflage measures. All the planning documents related to the movement of the troops were worked out, as a rule, handwritten by a limited number of persons. The missions were given orally. The corps routes were chosen bypassing population points. In the previous positions (combat areas) of the troops, various dummy defensive works, as well as mark-ups of weapons and equipment were set up, and radios were left which transmitted under the previously established operating conditions. The enemy was deceived and misled. For example, on the First Ukrainian Front in preparing for the Sandomierz-Silesian Operation for misleading the enemy a tank corps was assigned which for 5 days feigned the concentrating of a tank army in the zone of the 60th Army. The concealed movement of the troops was also achieved by making the march in darkness, in fog and rain or under other conditions of limited visibility. The observance of camouflage discipline was of important significance. The vehicles and the tracks left by them at halt areas were camouflaged.

The difficulty of organizing logistical support for the march was basically that it was carried out in a restricted time. The establishing of the necessary supplies of materiel, primarily fuel and lubricants, caused particularly great difficulties. Correct actions were followed by those commanders of the tank and mechanized corps who endeavored primarily to replenish the battalion and brigade supplies. This was done, as a rule, from the army and front dumps (depots). First of all the supplies were replenished for the subunits and units assigned to fight in the forward detachments and vanguards. Additional tanks with fuel and oil were carried on the tanks and SAU. The refueling of the tanks and SAU in the course of a march was ordinarily carried out at halts and day's rest and sometimes upon arrival in the concentration area, where the corps and army rear units and subunits had been sent. Very often the supplies of fuel and lubricants in the course of a march and after its conclusion were replenished by the forces of the front.

An analysis of the war's experience shows that a well thought out organization of logistical support made it possible for the tank (mechanized) formations to have a sufficient amount of material supplies not only for the march but also for subsequent combat operations. For example, the corps of the 5th Guards Tank

Army after completing the march of 13-15 September 1944, had 2.5-2.7 loads of diesel fuel, 1-1.9 fueling of gasoline, 1.2-2.5 units of fire for basic types of ammunition and 6-8 day's rations of food.⁷

In the course of a march the repair facilities followed as part of the technical maintenance echelons of the columns and were used in a differentiated manner. For example, the technical maintenance echelon of a corps was entrusted with carrying out routine and medium repairs while the basic tasks for the technical maintenance echelon of the brigades was to eliminate technical malfunctions and carry out routine repairs lasting from 3 to 10 hours. A larger portion of the broken down vehicles was repaired, as a rule, on the spot by the forces of the repair and rebuilding subunits. For carrying out medium repairs, damaged vehicle collecting points (SPAM) were organized. Due to the well organized maintenance measures for the marches, the breaking down of tanks, particularly in the concluding period of the war, declined constantly. Thus, in the Vistula-Oder Operation, after the corps of the 2d Guards Tank Army had made an 80-km march, only two tanks had broken down.⁸

In conclusion it must be emphasized that the tendency which appeared during the years of the Great Patriotic War of consistently increasing the role of marches in troop combat activities has been further developed in the postwar period.

FOOTNOTES

¹ TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 299, inv. 3070, file 444, sheet 157.

² "Final" [Finale], Moscow, Nauka, 1969, p 93.

³ TsAMO, folio 299, inv. 3070, file 580, sheet 1.

⁴ Ibid., folio 307, inv. 4143, file 244, sheet 3.

⁵ Ibid., inv. 4148, file 144, sheet 173.

⁶ Ibid., folio 235, inv. 2088, file 83, sheet 294.

⁷ Ibid., sheet 290.

⁸ Ibid., folio 23, inv. 352785, file 101, sheet 123.

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EMPLOYMENT OF AIR FORCE IN BELORUSSIAN OPERATION VIEWED

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 8, Aug 84 (signed to press 24 Jul 84) pp 32-38

[Article by Hero of the Soviet Union, Honored Military Pilot of the USSR, Col Gen Avn S. Golubev: "The Soviet Air Forces in the Belorussian Operation"]

[Text] The Belorussian Offensive Operation conducted by the Soviet Army in the summer of 1944 was a major event not only for the Patriotic War but also for the entire World War II. This was a very important victory for our people and their valorous Armed Forces.

As a result of the winter and spring offensive in 1944, the Soviet Armed Forces had liberated a significant portion of the nation's territory which had been occupied by the Nazi invaders and, having restored the state frontier for a distance of 400 km, had entered Romanian territory. The Soviet Army was confronted with the real prospect of developing the offensive in the Balkans, in the western oblasts of Belorussia, the Ukraine and Baltic.

In Belorussia, the front stretched more than 1,100 km along a line of Lake Neshcherdo, to the east of Vitebsk, Mogilev, Zhlobin and along the Pripyat River. Defending this line was the Army Group Center which covered the best routes of advance, blocking the path of the Soviet troops to Warsaw. The strongly developed enemy defenses consisted of several lines positioned to a depth of 250-270 km. The ground troops were supported by the aviation of the 6th and partially the 2d and 4th Air Fleets numbering a total of 1,350 aircraft.¹

The aim of the Belorussian Offensive Operation was to defeat the Army Group Center, liberate Belorussia and establish the prerequisites for the subsequent offensive.

The grouping of Soviet troops involved in the operation consisted of the First Baltic, Third, Second and First Belorussian Fronts. These, correspondingly, included the 3d Air Army (commander, Lt Gen Avn N. F. Papivin), the 1st Air Army (commander, Lt Gen Avn M. M. Gromov, from 2 July 1944, Col Gen Avn T. T. Khryukin), the 4th Air Army (commander, Col Gen Avn K. A. Vershinin), the 16th Air Army (commander, Col Gen Avn S. I. Rudenko) and the 6th Air Army (commander, Lt Gen Avn F. P. Polynin). In addition, the operation involved the long-range aviation [ADD] (commander, Mar Avn A. Ye. Golovanov) and air defense fighter

units. As a total by the start of the operation there were 5,300 aircraft (not counting the ADD aircraft and air defense fighters) and this made it possible to establish almost a 4-fold superiority over enemy aviation.²

In the course of the combat operations of the fronts, Soviet aviation was to firmly maintain air supremacy; to support and cover the troops in breaking through the tactical enemy defensive zone and in exploiting success in the operational depth; to support the commitment of the army and front mobile groups to the breakthrough and their actions; to prevent the approach of enemy reserves and disrupt the planned retreat of its troops; to continuously conduct air reconnaissance in the interests of the ground troops. The ADD was aimed at attacking enemy airfields and interdicting the rail movements of enemy troops. A portion of its forces was used together with the frontal [tactical] aviation in destroying the most important objectives in the tactical enemy defensive zone. For ensuring the massed employment of the ADD and the subsequent shifting of its efforts, Headquarters set the offensive by the First Belorussian Front 24 hours later than the other fronts.

Air Forces operations in conducting front-level operations were planned in the form of an air offensive. Contributing to this were: the quantitative growth of the aircraft fleet, the improvement of the tactical flight performance of the aviation equipment, the previously gained combat experience of employing aviation in large offensive operations. Particular attention was given to supporting the commitment of the mobile groups to battle and their subsequent actions. After breaking through the enemy defenses, up to 75 percent of the aviation resources of the front was assigned for supporting the operations of the tank armies, the tank corps and cavalry-mechanized groups [KMG].

In preparing for an operation, enormous work was carried out in the air armies. By the start of the offensive, 148 field airfields had been built and a network of dummy airfields had been set up. Each air army had 4-8 fuelings and 8-10 units of fire.³ A great deal of attention was given to camouflaging the concentration of our aviation and to air reconnaissance of the enemy. Air force units received aerial surveys with the position of the forward edge and the enemy firing points. The questions of cooperation, target designation and guidance of the aviation were clarified.

Considering the experience of the previous operations, the air units and formations were concentrated at airfields some 100-120 km from the front line and just 2 days or so before the offensive moved up covertly to the closest front airfields in small groups and, as a rule, at dusk and at a low altitude.

In the aim of weakening the enemy air grouping in Belorussia, the Air Forces Command, prior to the start of the operation, conducted an air operation with the ADD forces. On 13, 14, 15 and 18 June, eight corps made massed attacks on eight airfields where around 60 percent of the enemy aircraft were based. Around 1,500 aircraft sorties were made.⁴ The airfields in the area of Minsk and Baranovichi were subjected to particularly effective bombing. As a result the enemy suffered great losses and was forced to pull back its aviation from the forward airfields deep into the defenses.

During the night of 23 June, a preliminary air softening up was conducted. Involved in this were 405 long-range bombers which attacked the basic enemy strongpoints in the breakthrough sectors of the Third and Second Belorussian Fronts. The nighttime PO-2 bombers made 464 aircraft sorties. On the Orsha sector, the operations of the night aviation were supplemented by a concentrated attack of 160 daylight bombers. During the night of 24 June, in the area of the First Belorussian Front, 303 ADD bombers and two bomber divisions of the 16th Air Army were operating. On 23 and 24 June, the widespread fogs in the area of the airfields as well as over the battlefield did not make it possible to fully carry out the planned Soviet air operations.

The presence of large air forces in the air armies as well as the high artillery and mortar density during the period of the immediate artillery and air softening up for the attack made it possible to allocate their efforts in terms of tasks and depth of operations against the enemy: the first position would be worked with artillery and mortar fire while the second and third would be the objects of concentrated bomber and ground attack air strikes. Subsequently, there was a transition to air support (escorting) of the troops by conducting wave operations by groups of aircraft of six-eight ground attack planes with small time intervals. The continuousness of air support, depending upon the situation, was from 2-3 hours up to constantly over the entire day. As the weather improved, the intensity of air strikes grew constantly. Thus, after the committing of the 5th Guards Tank Army to battle on the Bogushev sector, on the morning of 26 June its offensive was supported by four air corps and two divisions. The 1st Air Army assisted the successful operations of the Soviet troops of surrounding the enemy groupings in the area of Vitebsk and Orsha. By air strikes it destroyed the surrounded Nazi units in the area of Vitebsk and provided dependable support and cover for the mobile formations. In their interests the aviators destroyed enemy reserves which were moving up, they neutralized its individual centers of resistance, conducted reconnaissance and provided a cover against air strikes. The bombers made several raids against the airfields of Balbasovo, Borisov and Dokudovo. In air battles just the pilots of the I Guards Fighter Air Corps downed 20 Nazi aircraft in 2 days.

In fearing encirclement, the Nazis began to hurriedly pull back their troops from Orsha. The aviators were not confronted with a new mission of preventing the troop pullback, disrupting shipments and prevent the evacuation of plundered loot. For this strikes were made against the rail stations of Kokhanovo, Tolochin and against troops columns on the Moscow--Minsk Highway.

With the high rate of advance of the Soviet troops, the command and the staffs of the air armies required exceptional efficiency and the ability to quickly and promptly organize cooperation with the troops and the advancing formations and units, to promptly and accurately determine the direction and objects of the attacks and allocate the necessary forces. Particular attention had to be given to organizing support for the mobile formations committed to the breakthrough. For this purpose, major air forces were assigned. Thus, in the interests of the KMG, the commander of the 1st Air Army assigned a bomber corps, as well as a night bomber division, a ground attack air division and a fighter air corps. The I Guards Tank Corps of the First Belorussian Front advancing on Bobruysk was supported by fighter and ground attack air divisions while the IX Tank Corps was supported by three air corps of the 16th Air Army.

A significant role was assigned to aviation in defeating the surrounded enemy groupings. On 27 June, the air reconnaissance pilots discovered large columns of enemy troops trying to break out of the encirclement in the area of Bobruysk. Two bomber corps and four ground attack air divisions, a total of 526 aircraft, were assigned to make a massed strike against these forces. Initially the regimental groups made the attack against the head units of the columns and then against the accumulations of enemy troops. The bombers and ground attack planes were covered by vertically separated fighters. As a result of the raid which lasted 90 minutes, the enemy abandoned all the tanks, around 5 000 guns and 1,000 motor vehicles and endeavored to break through to Bobruysk but fell under the flank attack of the CV Rifle Corps of the 65th Army. By this time the troops of the 48th Army had moved up and by attacks from several directions by 1300 hours on 28 June had basically eliminated the surrounded enemy grouping.⁵

In order to prevent the planned retreat of the enemy and ensure a high rate of advance for the ground forces, the aviation of the 1st, 4th and 16th Air Armies made effective strikes against the rail stations, the retreating enemy columns and accumulations around crossings. From 23 June through 4 July, the frontal aviation and ADD made more than 55,000 aircraft sorties.⁶ This was 1.5-fold more than over the entire period of the counteroffensive at Stalingrad.

The rapidly changing situation on the fronts demanded from the commanders of the air armies and formations the effective maneuvering of aviation and the concentrating of the bomber and ground attack plane efforts on supporting the troops advancing in the main sectors. For example, the bombers of the 16th Air Army of the First Belorussian Front, upon instructions of the air representative of Hq SHC, were shifted to destroying the enemy troops and equipment crossing the Berezina in the zone of the Second Belorussian Front.

For thwarting the attempts of the Nazi Command to restore a solid defensive front at the start of July, in a zone 700 km wide from Daugavpils to Lwow, upon instructions of Hq SHC an air operation was conducted by the forces of the 3d, 1st, 16th and 2d air armies and ADD. The rail junctions and stations, trains on sidings, tank and mechanized columns as well as enemy airfields, were subjected to repeated attack. Just in the period from 1 through 4 July, the frontal aviation of the four air armies made 1,200 aircraft sorties for this purpose and the ADD made 1,100.⁷

The rapid advance of the Soviet troops to the west caused the frequent changing of the bases of the air units. At the end of the first stage of the Belorussian Operation the airfields were 140-200 km away from the front line. In retreating the Nazis had blown up the airfield structures, man-made surfaces and bridges and had destroyed the roads. The air rear units frequently fell behind en route and difficulties arose with fuel and ammunition. Under these extremely complex conditions the civil air fleet units, the military transport regiments and the ADD formations in LI-2 aircraft delivered fuel and lubricants, ammunition, spare parts and food to the forward airfields.

On 5 July, the second stage of the Belorussian Operation commenced. The troops of the fronts, in surmounting stubborn enemy resistance, continued to move rapidly to the west. Their successful operations were securely supported from the air.

In the course of the Belorussian Operation the art of the Soviet Air Forces underwent further development and was enriched with a number of new concepts.

The operations of Soviet aviation were characterized by *great scope and high intensity*. As a total over the operation the frontal and long-range aviation made 153,545 aircraft sorties. Of these 35.5 percent was spent on operations against enemy troops, 42 percent for winning air supremacy, around 13 percent for air reconnaissance, 8.2 percent for combating reserves and around 1.3 percent for supplying materiel to the troops and partisans. In addition to this, some 3,160 aircraft sorties were made by the air defense fighter aviation which covered the lines of communications of the First Baltic Front and the three Belorussian fronts. Up to 2,000 Nazi aircraft were destroyed in air battles and at airfields.⁹

The command of the air armies and the formation commanders gained experience in planning combat operations for the period of conducting the front-level operations and this undoubtedly facilitated the air operations in the course of the offensive.

The massing of aviation in the sectors of the main thrusts was carried out primarily by the maneuvering of the air formations from in depth and along the front. Thus, in June around 3,000 airplanes were relocated from the Reserve Supreme High Command [RVGK] and from other areas of the front into Belorussia.¹⁰ In the front-level offensive operations, for increasing the air efforts in the crucial sectors, the Air Forces Command shifted units and formations from one air army to another or concentrated the forces in the zone of the neighboring front. The massing of forces was also achieved by using the ADD and air defense aviation.

Where the troops were making two attacks, for example, the Third and First Belorussian Fronts, for the massing of forces on the sectors of the thrusts, particularly if these were planned far apart, special air groups were organized from formations of ground attack and fighter aviation. The concentrating of air efforts on the main sectors increased the effectiveness of its combat operations both in the offensive operations of the ground troops as well as in the fight against the air enemy.

There was further development of the *air offensive as a form of the operational employment of the Air Forces*. The air softening up was divided into two stages: preliminary and direct. In the course of the preliminary air softening up, the aviation by concentrated attacks caused tangible losses to the enemy personnel and combat equipment, it impeded the regrouping of enemy troops and wore down the forces of the personnel.

The direct air softening up was carried out, as a rule, during the night prior to an offensive by the ground troops and then during the artillery softening up of the attack. It ended with air strikes ahead of the infantry and tank attack. The concentrated attacks and wave operations were the basic methods of combat for the ground attack and bomber formations and units. But massed strikes were also employed. During the direct air softening up and then in the course of the offensive, the air army made one or two and sometimes three attacks a day.

Between these attacks the formations and units operated in small-group waves. This made it possible to achieve continuous air support for the advancing troops to the entire depth of their combat missions.

In the course of the operation *the combat methods of the formations of the branches of aviation were improved*. With the start of the offensive the ground attack planes operated in small groups with intervals of 8-12 minutes. This provided continuous action against the enemy. Subsequently, they made attacks in large forces. The frontal bomber aviation made attacks against particularly important strongpoints and centers of enemy resistance, against enemy reserves in assembly areas using large groups of planes. Thus, in the Rogachev-Bobruysk sector, pilots from the 16th Air Army made two massed attacks (224 and 163 PE-2 planes). The bombers destroyed small-sized targets by diving in groups of 6-9 planes.

The concentrated and massed raids by the frontal bomber and ground attack aviation were supported with a dependable cover. The fighters sealed off the enemy airfields, they first cleared the airspace and forced the enemy fighters from the operational area of our bombers and ground attack planes. Also widely used was their direct escorting to the target and covering in the strike area.

The Soviet fighters patrolled the air and operated from a "airfield alert" status, they organized ambushes on the ground and in the air and practiced free hunting. They constantly covered the ground troops, they ensured the supremacy of our aviation in the air and with little resistance from the air enemy were also involved in attacking ground targets.

The struggle for air supremacy was waged continuously not only in the skies but also by destroying enemy aircraft on the ground. For example, on 25 and 26 June, during the battles for Orsha and Bobruysk, when the activeness of Nazi aviation increased, bombers from the 1st Air Army made several powerful raids against the airfields of Borisov and Dokudovo. Particularly effective was the raid by the 6th Guards Bomber Air Division against the Orsha airfield and as a result of this not a single enemy aircraft was able to scramble.

The ADD together with the frontal aviation was involved in destroying the enemy in its tactical defensive zone. However, its basic efforts (up to 60 percent of the aircraft sorties) in contrast to previous operations, were focused on the struggle against the enemy operational reserves and its rail movements.

Nighttime operations of the frontal aviation and the ADD comprised 18 percent of all the aircraft sorties. The enemy suffered substantial losses from the nighttime attacks. They had a demoralizing effect on the enemy personnel.

In the air units a great deal of attention was given to air reconnaissance. Each crew was obliged to observe the movement of enemy troops and report this to the command. Nevertheless, in a number of instances, due to the delayed transmission of information to the staffs, particularly in repelling enemy counterattacks and counterstrikes, aviation frequently operated against enemy troops which had already gone over to the attack or against reserves ready to deploy.

The successful employment of aviation in the operation was greatly aided by the skillfully organized *centralized control and command of the air units and formations*. The control and command of the air groups which were organized for joint operations with the tank armies and the KMG, were entrusted to the commander of one of the air corps or the deputy commander of an air army. For guiding the attack groups of bombers and ground attack planes to the targets, experienced aviation officers (aviation spotters) with radios were assigned to the rifle corps, the cavalry divisions, the tank and mechanized brigades. During combat operations they traveled in the battle formations in tanks or on special vehicles with radios and maintained contact with the superior staffs and the commanders of the groups in the air, providing guidance and target designation. All of this made it possible to quickly respond to changes in the situation and rapidly concentrate aviation efforts on carrying out the most important and newly arising tasks.

It must be pointed out that the effectiveness of air combat operations in the concluding stage of the operation declined somewhat due to the absence of air rear units. As a rule, the airfield maintenance battalions (BAO) traveled with the advancing troops. The ground units captured enemy airfields, held them and defended them until the arrival of the air rear services. But their low mobility, the small amount of motor vehicle and special transport, equipment for the repair and construction of roads as well as landing strips created difficulties in the reconstruction of the airfields and in supporting and supplying aviation with fuel and ammunition which sometimes had to be delivered by air.

In the course of the operation, the high moral-combat spirit of our aviators was demonstrated with new strength. In fierce battles and engagements, they did not spare their lives and went boldly into danger for the sake of victory over the enemy. Many of them became Heroes of the Soviet Union, tens of thousands of aviators were awarded orders and medals while 100 aviation units and formations received honorific names.¹¹

The heroic feats of the pilots and navigators, engineers and technicians and air rear specialists during the years of the Great Patriotic War are a vivid example for emulation for the younger generation of aviators who in intense combat training days constantly master modern air equipment and weapons and in every possible way add to the combat traditions of the Soviet Air Forces.

FOOTNOTES

¹ For the composition of the groupings of the armed forces of the belligerents, the overall plan of the Belorussian Operation and the course of combat operations, see: VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 6, 1984.

² "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945" [History of World War II of 1939-1945], Moscow, Voenizdat, Vol 9, 1978, p 47.

³ "Sovetskiye Voenno-Vozdushnyye Sily v Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne 1941-1945 gg." [Soviet Air Forces in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1968, p 295.

- ⁴ VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 6, 1972, p 24.
- ⁵ "Vtoraya mirovaya voyna 1939-1945" [World War II 1939-1945], Vol 9, pp 51, 54.
- ⁶ "Istoriya voyennogo iskusstva" [History of Military Art], Moscow, Monino: Izd. Voenno-vozdushnoy akademii imeni Yu. A. Gagarin, 1978, pp 137-138.
- ⁷ VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 4, 1975, p 33.
- ⁸ [Not in text]
- ⁹ "Istoriya voyennogo iskusstva," p 143.
- ¹⁰ TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 35, inv. 30812, file 58 sheet 254.
- ¹¹ "Istoriya voyennogo iskusstva," p 143.

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BIOGRAPHIC DATA ON MAR SU S. S. BIRYUZOV

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 8, Aug 84 (signed to press 24 Jul 84) pp 39-42

[Unattributed article: "Mar SU S. S. Biryuzov (On the Occasion of His 80th Birthday)"]

[Text] The prominent Soviet military leader Mar SU Sergey Semenovich Biryuzov* began his military service in September 1922 as an officer candidate at the infantry-machine gun command courses. Later after completing the Moscow Joint Military School imeni VTsIK, he commanded a platoon, a company and a battalion and headed the staff of a rifle division and the operations section of the staff of the Kharkov Military District. In August 1939, he was appointed commander of the 132d Rifle Division. He joined the ranks of the Leninist party in 1926.

From the very first days of service, S. S. Biryuzov showed remarkable qualities which he, as a military leader, later developed in himself all his life. These were a party and creative approach to the assigned job, total dedication of energy and knowledge to the training of the troops and a constant search for the new. He always showed great respect for others, he instructed them and learned himself, he was exacting and just and for this he had high authority among subordinates and the senior command.

Sergey Semenovich Biryuzov in any area of work endeavored to gain maximum results. The troops commanded by Sergey Semenovich excelled in excellent skills and strong discipline. Due primarily to his able leadership the 132d Rifle Division by the autumn of 1940 had become the leading one in the Kharkov Military District in terms of the results of military and political training and its light artillery regiment was the best in the corps.

* Sergey Semenovich Biryuzov was born on 8 (21) August 1904 in the town of Skopin, Ryazan Oblast. At the age of 13 he began his independent life as a farm worker and a lumberman. For more detail about Mar SU S. S. Biryuzov, see: VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 8, 1974, pp 58-63; "Sovetskaya Voyennaya Entsiklopediya" [Soviet Military Encyclopedia], Moscow, Voenizdat, Vol 1, 1976, pp 477-478.

At the start of the Great Patriotic War, after bringing the division up to 15,000 men, S. S. Biryuzov accepted his first battle with the Nazi troops. This occurred on 12 July 1941 by Chaussy Station in Mogilev Oblast. The subunits of the enemy reconnaissance detachment which had broken through far ahead suddenly attacked the first echelon of the division where the division commander himself was. The Soviet troops under his leadership met the Nazis with organized rifle and artillery fire. Going over to a counterattack, our men in a short engagement with the enemy set fire to two tanks, completed its rout, capturing several prisoners. The duty crews of the 37-mm antiaircraft cannons downed one enemy aircraft attempting to attack the echelon from a low-level flight. The success of this combat instilled confidence in the personnel that the Nazis not only had to but also could be beaten.

In the difficult, intense engagements of the first period of the war, S. S. Biryuzov skillfully organized the defense and retreat, counterattacks and offensive and in critical moments personally participated in the battles, demonstrating examples of resourcefulness, courage and heroism. In pulling out of an encirclement on the night of 17 October, the head regiment of the division near the village of Veselaya Kalina encountered heavy fire of guns, mortars and machine guns. The division commander arrived at the extended line. The general standing at full height moved forward and raised the men to the attack. Regardless of the sustained wound, he along with all the others broke into the village, by throwing a grenade in one of the houses he destroyed a machine gun next but at the same time was severely wounded. Disregarding the pain, Sergey Semenovitch was able to assemble the scattered subunits into a single detachment and led them, remaining in the battle formations until the division was out of the encirclement.

In properly commending the outstanding abilities of S. S. Biryuzov, the Military Council of the 13th Army of which the 132d Rifle Division was part, characterized him in the following manner: "He has a good understanding of the tactical situation. He skillfully commands the units in combat. He does not become lost in a combat situation. A bold, decisive commander who does not know fear.... Worthy of promotion to the position of deputy army commander or army chief of staff."

In May 1942, after treatment in one of the Alma-Ata hospitals, S. S. Biryuzov was appointed to the position of chief of staff of the 48th Army, and in December of the same year to the same position in the 2d Guards Army. Later he headed the following staffs: from April 1943, the Southern Front (from 20 October, renamed the Fourth Ukrainian), and from May 1944, the Third Ukrainian Front. Sergey Semenovitch took a direct part in preparing and carrying out the operations to liberate the Donets Basin, Northern Tavria and the Crimea, as well as the Melitopol, Nikopol-Krivoy Rog, Iasi-Kishinev and Belgrad Offensive Operations.

In staff work, Sergey Semenovitch showed unusual organizing abilities, he skillfully and intelligently planned the combat operations of the field forces and formations of the fronts and ensured firm command of the troops in the course of their carrying out of the combat missions. The staffs led by him always excelled in organization and high quality elaboration of the operational documents, as well as by the prompt and irreproachable execution of the adopted

decisions. Knowing staff work down to the last details, S. S. Biryuzov commented: "In order for an offensive to develop successfully, it is essential to assess the situation correctly, to draw accurate conclusions from it and on the basis of them take the solely correct decision. This is a very intense, I would say, torturous process. Exceptional resourcefulness, courage and will power should be found not only in the commander but also in his staff and in all the command services. Grief will befall the person who does not possess such qualities and at the crucial moment cannot say either 'yes' or 'no'.... Usually the staff thinks through scores of variations, carefully weighing the pluses and minuses of each. All these variations are reported to the commander and he has the last word."²

Many operations, including the Iasi-Kishinev, were prepared with such a creative approach. Gen S. S. Biryuzov was able to persuade the superior command of the advisability of making the main thrust not on the Kishinev sector, where there was broad scope for tank operations and concealed approaches for the troops to take up the jump-off position, but rather from the Kitskan bridgehead (an area of 70 km²) in the aim of achieving surprise of attack against a weaker enemy grouping. The staff of the Third Ukrainian Front under his leadership with particular care planned the covert concentration and subsequent operations of 12 rifle divisions, around 4,500 guns and mortars and more than 250 tanks on an 18-km breakthrough area, having provided here a superiority over the enemy of 8-fold for infantry, 5.7-fold for tanks and 6-fold for artillery. Indicative also was the simulation organized by the front's staff of preparations for active operations in the Kishinev area. As a result the enemy command was confused and even on the second day of the offensive kept its basic forces numbering 18 divisions in the Kishinev area. On 22 August, these were surrounded by the troops of the Second and Third Ukrainian Fronts.

On 8 September 1944, the armies of the Third Ukrainian Front entered Bulgarian territory. The provided aid gave an opportunity to the Bulgarian people on the second day to take power in their own hands. For coordinating actions of the Soviet and Bulgarian troops in the joint struggle against the Nazi invaders, upon the request of the people's government of Bulgaria, on 13 September, Hq SHC issued instructions to send Col Gen S. S. Biryuzov to Sofia. Cooperation with the Bulgarian troops was organized by him through the General Staff of the Bulgarian Army. A rifle corps began moving into the Sofia area and a portion of the forces of the 17th Air Army began to be relocated there.³

In commanding the Sofia Troop Group of the Front and simultaneously being the deputy chairman of the Allied Control Commission in Bulgaria, Sergey Semenovitch showed great abilities not only as a major military leader but also as a diplomat, particularly in organizing cooperation of the Soviet, Bulgarian and Yugoslav troops in the operation to liberate the capital of Yugoslavia. On 13 October 1944, our tanks together with Yugoslav soldiers approached Belgrad and soon thereafter entered the capital. In order to avoid excessive victims among the local population, the storming of the city was carried out without air and artillery softening up. "The Russian heroes," the prominent public figure of Yugoslavia, Rodolub Colakovic, wrote later on, "shed their blood so that in the struggle to liberate the city the fewest possible women and children would perish. The residents of Belgrad all understood this and simply blessed their liberators."⁴

Sergey Semenovitch devoted a great deal of time and energy to work on the Allied Control Commission. This carried out various tasks. These included secure protecting of the Bulgarian frontiers, controlling the issuing of entry and exit visas, clearing mines from population points and the terrain as well as many other functions.

From October 1944, S. S. Biryuzov simultaneously commanded the 37th Army which was located in Bulgaria. In maintaining high combat readiness, its troops along with supporting the left flank of the Soviet-German Front, helped the Bulgarian peasantry in harvesting and in carrying out other field work.

Hero of the Soviet Union S. S. Biryuzov devoted more than 42 years of his life to the Soviet Armed Forces, traveling from private to Marshal of the Soviet Union. After completing his international duty in Bulgaria, Sergey Semenovitch was appointed commander of the Maritime Military District (1947-1953), and then commander-in-chief of the Central Group of Forces (1953-1954). He was the first deputy commander-in-chief of the National Air Defense Troops (1954-1955), deputy minister of defense and commander-in-chief of the National Air Defense Troops (1955-1962), deputy minister of defense and commander-in-chief of the Strategic Rocket Troops (1962-1963) and chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces and USSR first deputy minister of defense (1963-1964). In holding major leadership positions in the Armed Forces, S. S. Biryuzov devoted all his energy and knowledge to increasing the combat readiness of the troops. Wholehearted service of the motherland, dedication to the cause of the CPSU, humility, sensitivity and responsiveness to others won him the respect of all the Army and Navy personnel.

Sergey Semenovitch made a major contribution to the development of military science. He was the author of a number of military-scientific works on the problems of the organizational development of the Soviet Army and on the questions of strategy and operational art and military history.

S. S. Biryuzov conducted great party work. He was elected a candidate member of the CPSU Central Committee and a member of the CPSU Central Committee. For a number of years he was a deputy of the USSR Supreme Soviet. For services to the motherland he was awarded many orders and medals of the USSR as well as foreign orders.

On 19 October 1964, the life of Mar SU S. S. Biryuzov and his combat comrades was ended in an air crash. On Mount Avala, near Belgrad, where the heroes of the engagements against the Nazi invaders are in eternal rest, there now stands a monument to the deceased members of the Soviet military delegation which was headed by S. S. Biryuzov.

All the life of the active builder of the USSR Armed Forces, Mar SU Segey Semenovitch Biryuzov, has been an example of wholehearted service of the Communist Party and the Soviet people.

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ M. T. Chernyshev and K. Ya. Chermashentsev, "Zhizn'--Rodine" [A Life for the Motherland], Moscow, Politizdat, 1974, p 48.
- ² S. S. Biryuzov, "Sovetskiy soldat na Balkanakh" [A Soviet Soldier in the Balkans], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1963, p 38. He also wrote his memoirs "Kogda gremeli pushki" [When the Cannons Roared] (Moscow, Voenizdat, 1961). Both these works have been published in a single volume in 1966 under the title "Surovyye gody" [Harsh Years].
- ³ "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945" [History of World War II 1939-1945], Moscow, Voenizdat, Vol 9, 1978, pp 126, 127.
- ⁴ M. T. Chernyshev and K. Ya. Chermashentsev, op. cit., p 93.

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BIOGRAPHIC DATA ON AIR MARSHAL P. S. KUTAKHOV

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 8, Aug 84 (signed to press 24 Jul 84) pp 43-46

[Article by Hero of the Soviet Union, Mar Avn S. Rudenko: "Ch Mar Avn P. S. Kutakhov (On the Occasion of His 70th Birthday)"]

[Text] 16 August 1984 marks the 70th birthday of the Soviet military leader, the Commander-in-Chief of the Air Forces and USSR Deputy Minister of Defense, Ch Mar Avn Pavel Stepanovich Kutakhov.

Pavel Stepanovich Kutakhov was born in 1914 in the village of Malo-Kirsanovka, presently in Matveyevo-Kurganskiy Rayon of Rostov Oblast, in a peasant family. He commenced his labor activities in July 1934 as a machinist at an aviation plant. He combined his work with study on the rabfak [worker faculty] at an industrial institute. In 1935, under a Komsomol assignment, he was sent to the Stalingrad Military Pilots School. Soon after completing it, P. S. Kutakhov was appointed the commander of a flight of a fighter air regiment. He participated in the liberation campaign of the Soviet Army in the Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia. During the Soviet-Finnish War of 1939-1940, he made 131 combat sorties.

The Great Patriotic War found P. S. Kutakhov at Vyborg. He made his first air battles in the skies of Leningrad and Vyborg. Later Squadron Commander P. S. Kutakhov fought in the Soviet Arctic as part of the Air Forces of the Karelian Front. The Nazi Command was endeavoring to knock out the Murmansk Port by attacks of the 5th Air Fleet, to prevent the passage of Allied Convoys through the Barents and White Seas and prevent the operation of the Kirov Railroad. The path of Nazi aviation was insurmountably blocked by the Soviet fighter pilots. Among them was P. S. Kutakhov who won glory as one of the best air fighters.

It was hard to fight under the conditions of the long polar day and even harder in the infinite polar night. Frequently in combat numerical superiority was on the enemy side. But this did not intimidate the Soviet pilots, they always sought out the enemy, attacked it and won. Along with his combat comrades, P. S. Kutakhov had to provide an air cover for Murmansk, the Kirov Railroad and the ground troops. And no matter what combat mission they were carrying out, they always achieved success.

In May 1942, in repelling an enemy air raid against Kitsa Station, six Soviet fighters headed by P. S. Kutakhov had to fight against eight enemy aircraft. Loyal to his rule, the squadron commander was the first to attack. By a rapid maneuver our pilots broke up the enemy formation. The Nazi pilots lost their bearings and could not even think about attacking the trains. An air battle broke out. In this whirling tangle, P. S. Kutakhov caught a Messerschmitt in his sight. An accurate burst from short range and the flame-ingulfed Nazi aircraft dove to the ground. The other pilots also downed several planes.

On 15 May, four planes led by P. S. Kutakhov encountered 20 enemy ME-110 and ME-109 over the front line. But the 5-fold numerical superiority did not bring success to the Nazis. Having lost three ME-109 and without downing a single Soviet plane, they abandoned the carrying out of their combat mission. Maneuvering the group in combat and having "outplayed" the enemy tactically by the skillful employment of advanced methods, P. S. Kutakhov downed a Messerschmitt. And his comrades in combat did the same as their commander.

On 8 September 1942, PRAVDA in an article entitled "An Unsuccessful Raid Against Murmansk" wrote: "After a long calm in the area of Murmansk, air battles have again broken out. On 4 September, the Germans thrice endeavored to break through to the city but each time ran up against heavy antiaircraft fire and our fighters. Although more than 70 German bombers and fighters were recorded over the approaches to the city, the Germans did not succeed in dropping a single bomb on Murmansk. In the course of the battle, our fighters were particularly outstanding including the thrice order-winning Capt Kutakhov and pilots Kuleshov and Sverkunov. Each of them downed an enemy plane. As a total on the approaches to the city the Germans lost five aircraft including four Messerschmitt-109-F. In addition, the antiaircraft artillery damaged another plane."

The battles did not die down but became evermore stubborn and fierce. And in each of these P. S. Kutakhov emerged the victor because he was brave and possessed professional flight skills and was a talented commander. The squadron pilots well recalled his commanding words voiced once in giving a combat mission: "A feat requires not only great valor but also great ideas."

The fame of the deeds of the courageous squadron commander traveled quickly through the Arctic. The newspapers CHASOVOY SEVERA, ZA RODINU and BOYEVAYA RAKHTA published portraits of P. S. Kutakhov and verses were written about him. The political section of the formation published a pamphlet which, in particular, stated that this remarkable pilot was always at the crucial area of combat and always at the necessary moment successfully carried out the mission for he possessed exceptional abilities as a commander and an air fighter.

The secret of his combat successes was primarily in his whole-hearted dedication to the Soviet people and to our Leninist party, in the constant improvement of his piloting techniques, maneuver and the skillful employment of weapons in combat. In analyzing his own combat experience, P. S. Kutakhov during short breaks between battles, prepared to publish a series of articles on the combat of Soviet pilots and also on the tactics and methods of combating enemy aircraft. These articles were: "Close Attacks," "From Short Range,"

"Success Was Determined by Reciprocal Coordination," "Combat Maturity," "Fighter Escorting of Bombers," "German Tactics in Group Combat," and "The Place of the Ace in Air Combat." These articles were a school of mastery and combat maturity for the young air pilots. At the same time, they also described the personality of P. S. Kutakhov himself and his ability to accurately pick up on the main thing, to see the importance behind the minor and instructively describe the experience gained in combat.

The squadron commanded by P. S. Kutakhov conducted 74 air battles in which 59 enemy planes were downed. Undoubtedly, the personal example of the communist commander served as the most powerful and reliable means for mobilizing the pilots to successfully carry out the combat missions. In combat, he was an example of intrepidity and an unbending will for victory for the sake of the happiness and freedom of his people.

For skillful command of the squadron, for high pilot skills, courage and valor, in February 1943 the command submitted P. S. Kutakhov for the title of Hero of the Soviet Union. The former commander of the 7th Air Army, Lt Gen Avn I. M. Sokolov, in the proposal wrote: "Maj Kutakhov, an intelligent and infinitely bold combat flight commander, has 31 downed aircraft to his score, 7 downed personally and the remainder in a group. His squadron among all the regiments is the best fighting squadron."

In April 1944, P. S. Kutakhov was appointed the deputy commander of a guards fighter air regiment and in May of the same year he became its commander.

Under the command of Pavel Stepanovich, the intensity of the regiment's combat operations increased significantly with 1,998 combat sorties being made.

During the years of the Great Patriotic War, P. S. Kutakhov made 367 combat sorties, he conducted 79 air battles and personally downed 14 planes and 28 in group battles.

After the war, having completed the Higher Officer Tactical-Flight Courses and the Military Academy of the General Staff, P. S. Kutakhov commanded air formations and field forces. Holding responsible command posts, he actively introduced the rich experience of the Great Patriotic War into the practice of the combat training of the air units and formations and made a major contribution to the development and combat employment of the first generations of jet aircraft and new air weapons. The formations and field forces led by him, as a rule, were leaders in terms of the combat readiness and air skills of the personnel.

From July 1967, P. S. Kutakhov was the first deputy commander-in-chief of the Air Forces and from March 1969, the commander-in-chief and the USSR deputy minister of defense. In 1972, he was given the rank of chief marshal of aviation.

Communist P. S. Kutakhov has devoted all his abundant energy to the cause of strengthening the defense capability of our state and to raising the combat might and readiness of the Air Forces. In possessing great experience, great theoretical preparation and organizational abilities as a military leader,

Pavel Stepanovich has made a major contribution to the development of the Air Forces, their tactics and operational art. Under his leadership many measures have been carried out to introduce new aviation equipment.

The Air Forces are presently at a qualitatively new stage and are a mighty Armed Service. Missile-carrying planes comprise their basis. The airborne missiles of these planes make it possible to hit enemy objects without entering the range of its air defenses.¹ The member of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee, the USSR Minister of Defense, Mar SU, Comrade D. F. Ustinov has pointed out that at present "due to the constant concern of the Communist Party and the Soviet government and to the tenacious labor of all the air industry workers, the technical level of the military and civilian aviation meets today's requirements."² Here a major contribution has been made by the Commander-in-Chief of the Air Forces, Ch Mar Avn P. S. Kutakhov.

Pavel Stapanovich constantly delves into the questions of the development of aviation equipment and into the work of the design bureaus and manufacturing plants.

The Air Forces commander-in-chief appears systematically in the periodical press with articles which widely analyze the role of the Air Forces during the Great Patriotic War and under present-day conditions and examine the questions of the development and improvement of their operational art.

Pavel Stapanovich is a member of the Main Editorial Commission of the Soviet Military Encyclopedia and the Military Encyclopedic Dictionary.

Along with the questions of strengthening the combat might of the Air Forces, Ch Mar Avn P. S. Kutakhov also carries out extensive party and state work. Since 1971 he has been a member of the CPSU Central Committee, a deputy to the USSR Supreme Soviet, 8th, 9th, 10th and 11th Sittings and has twice been elected a deputy to the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet.

P. S. Kutakhov devotes his vast knowledge and great experience in party and state activities to the cause of military organizational development and takes an active part in explaining the decisions of our party's congresses and the decrees of the plenums of the CPSU Central Committee as well as in carrying them out.

For services to the party and people and for courage and heroism shown in the battles against the Nazi invaders, P. S. Kutakhov has been awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union, he has received three Orders of Lenin, the Order of the October Revolution, five Orders of the Red Banner, the Orders of Kutuzov First Degree and Aleksandr Nevskiy, the Patriotic War First Degree, two Orders of the Red Star, the Order "For Service to the Motherland in the USSR Armed Forces" Third Degree, medals as well as many decorations of foreign states. He was among the first to receive the honorific title "Honored Military Pilot of the USSR." He is also the winner fo the Lenin Prize.

Pavel Stapanovich Kutakhov is celebrating his 70th anniversary full of creative strength. On his birthday we wish him good health, new major successes in the fruitful activities for the good of the Communist Party and the Soviet people and in the name of strengthening the combat might of the USSR Air Forces.

FOOTNOTES

¹ KOMMUNIST VOORUZHENNYKH SIL, No 13, 1983, p 68.

² "Order of the USSR Minister of Defense," KRASNAYA ZVEZDA, 15 August 1982.

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EMPLOYMENT OF WESTERN NAVIES IN LOCAL WARS EXAMINED

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 8, Aug 84 (signed to press 24 Jul 84) pp 47-52

[Article by Adm P. Navoytsev: "Naval Operations Off a Coast (From the Experience of Local Wars and Military Conflicts)"; the article was prepared from materials of the foreign press]

[Text] A characteristic feature in the majority of the local wars and military conflicts initiated by the imperialist states headed by the United States has been the extensive use of naval forces in them. Here the aggressor has always possessed a strong fleet and had a predominant superiority at sea. Under these conditions the basic mission of its naval forces has been operations against the coast. These, as a rule, have included: blockading the maritime nations, individual islands, ports and naval bases; making strikes against ground military and industrial installations, enemy troop groupings and population points; artillery and air support for its ground forces.

A naval blockade under certain favorable conditions (military-political, geographic and geological) has become the most effective form of employing the naval forces. In a number of instances, this has had a decisive influence on undermining the economy of the state subjected to aggression or has deprived its troops operating in the coastal areas of the necessary aid and materiel.

In the Korean War for blockading the coast two blockade zones (near and far) were established and patrolling in these was carried out by two task forces. Their size was not constant over time and included 2-4 carriers, 2-3 cruisers, 15-20 destroyers, patrol boats and minesweepers.

On the approaches to the Vietnamese coast, two zones were also established. Here the blockade operations were carried out by a specially established task force of the U.S. Navy (around 180 ships and launches). The near zone covered the waters up to a distance of 2 miles from the shoreline. The launches and minesweepers patrolling in it and the aircraft on standing patrol interdicted the movement of Vietnamese transport vessels and fishing boats. In the zone 12-40 miles off-shore, the tasks of monitoring the international shipping lines were carried out by cruisers, destroyers and patrol boats. Aviation also cooperated with them. Patrolling was carried out around-the-clock to a depth of over 360 km and in terms of length over 2,000 km. For increasing the effectiveness of the blockade operations, the zones were divided into individual

areas each of which had its own grouping of forces. All detected boats, including fishing ones, were subjected to inspection. From May 1972, in violating the standards of international law, Americans began to carry out a so-called "mining blockade." Carrier-based aviation made mass settings of mines on the approaches to all the North Vietnamese ports and this significantly impeded international navigation in this area.

With the assistance of the U.S. Navy, a rigid blockade of a foreign coast was established by Israeli naval vessels in the war against Lebanon.

The piratical methods of Israel's operations at sea are one of the characteristic features of the coastal blockade against the Arab countries. These were carried out particularly overtly during the fourth (from 6 through 24 October 1973) Israeli-Arab War in the Near East. In the area of the Red Sea, the aggressor had concentrated 20 torpedo, gun and landing boats¹ and carried out its blockade operations by a standing patrol method.

It is essential to bear in mind that each time, behind Israel, it can be said, in the second echelon of its Navy were allied vessels in full readiness. For example, during the Israeli aggression (1967) against Egypt, Syria and Jordan, the United States deployed its 6th Fleet consisting of 50 ships, including 2 attack aircraft carriers with 180 planes on board. A group of American ships (1 carrier and 2 destroyers) maneuvered in the Red Sea. Another 9 vessels were sent from Norfolk to Malta for strengthening the 6th Fleet.² Two English carriers were in the Mediterranean and Red Sea. The U.S. 6th Fleet was ready to provide Israel with emergency aid also in October 1973.

Probably the widest blockade operations were carried out in the South Atlantic (March-June 1982) during the Anglo-Argentine conflict. The Royal Navy Command at first was wagering basically on these. In order to achieve the ultimate goal of capturing the Falkland (Malvinas) Islands, a large ship force was to be deployed in the combat zone. With this they intended to organize a rigid blockade and force the enemy to surrender.

In addition to the scope of the blockade, the gradual increasing of the blockade forces, the use of nuclear submarines for combat patrolling and the organizing of constant sea patrols along with air ones can be considered particular features of the blockade imposed on the islands.

Formally, blockade operations of the island territories by the Royal Navy commenced on 12 April 1982, when the area within a radius of 200 miles around the islands was declared by the British government to be a "war zone." Formally, because the nuclear submarines on combat patrol service could not fully cover such a vast expanse of water and monitor all the sea lanes and approaches to the islands. The day of 30 April is considered to be the time of the actual establishing of the blockade. Precisely on this day the English ships of the first echelon approached the islands, giving the isolating of them from the sea an organizational completeness and true force. From 7 May the blockade zone was again widened and approached the Argentine coast. The missions of the forces operating in it came down basically to destroying or forcing the Argentine vessels and ships out of it. As a result, as certain foreign observers have written, this was achieved not so much by the activities of the Royal Navy

as by the passivity of the Argentine Navy which had approximately the same number of ships as the English grouping in the conflict area had. After the sinking of the cruiser "General Belgrano" by the English, the Argentine ships were withdrawn from the combat zone and did not leave their territorial waters until the end of the conflict. This created favorable conditions for the landing of the English force on the islands and for its further successful operations.

According to the conclusion of Western naval specialists, the blockade operations in local wars are one of the effective forms of employing the naval forces. Proof of this is also to be found in the most recent events involving the piratical activities of the naval forces of the United States and other imperialist countries. For blockading the Iranian coast of the Persian Gulf in April-May 1980, for example, a strong expeditionary grouping of American naval forces was sent out consisting of four carrier task forces and one amphibious landing group.³ In addition to blockade operations, the carrier forces took direct part in the airborne landing operation under the code name of Blue Light. The formal pretext for this was the supposed liberation of the American hostages held by the Iranians. But the true aim of the operation was moral and material support for the counterrevolutionaries and the signal for the start of a revolt in Tehran.

But what was not possible in Iran the U.S. naval forces did carry out in Grenada. On the very next day after a people's government came to power in this small island country, Washington began carrying out a hostile policy toward it. A naval blockade was one of the basic means for the moral, economic and military suppression of the revolution. According to a plan worked out by the CIA under the code name of "Pyramid"⁴ the U.S. Navy began to establish a "cordon sanitaire" around the island. Its aims, like the subsequent piratical action of capturing Grenada, were: to interrupt the process of restoring democracy in a foreign country; to intimidate the peoples of the region; and to "demonstrate American muscle" to the entire world.

In March 1984, the United States initiated a naval blockade of the Nicaraguan coast. The first step here was to dispatch a formation of naval vessels headed by the carrier "America" to the waters of Honduras from the territory of which aggression was being conducted against the neighboring country. A more dangerous measure was the mining of the Nicaraguan ports of Cornito, Sandino and Bluff⁵ in the aim of preventing the importing of extremely essential goods for the republic and preventing the exporting of products.

The illegal actions of the American Administration have already led to unnecessary sacrifices. During the first days of March two fishing vessels were blown up by mines at the entry to the port of Bluff; the Dutch vessel "Geopontes" and the cargo vessel "North Caribe" flying a Panamanian flag were damaged in Port Cornito; on 20 March the same fate befell the Soviet tanker "Lugansk" in approaching the port of Sandino.

In the actions of the aggressors' naval forces against a coast in local wars and military conflicts, a major place is held by the *attacking of ground military and industrial objects, troop groupings and population points*. Carrier based strike forces (CSF) have been used primarily as the main force for carrying out this

mission. Great importance has been given to organizing cooperation with the naval aviation with strategic and tactical aviation. Thus, in the summer of 1951, the American Command conducted Operation "Strangle." Its aims were to completely isolate the front from the rear, to turn the "workable" territory of North Korea into a "desert zone," to deprive the operational troops of the North Korean Army of all types of supply and to force the North Korean Army to surrender. Participating in the operation which, in the opinion of the Americans themselves, did not produce the expected results were: the aviation of the 77th CSF, the 1st Marine Air Wing and the 5th Air Army of the U.S. Air Force.⁶ The naval aviation attacked predominantly objectives on the coastal sectors. Naval artillery was also widely used. The ship groups included 4 battleships, 12 cruisers, more than 70 destroyers and so forth.⁷ Their fire was coordinated with air strikes and was supported by it. For example, in the blockade of Wonsan, the 77th CSF periodically assigned spotter planes to aid the ships firing on Wonsan and this, as U.S. specialists felt, improved the effectiveness of the firing. Several joint coordinated strikes were made. The first of them was made on 18 September 1941 by forces of the 95th Task Force. On 10 October there was a second strike involving an English task force consisting of a light carrier, a cruiser and 5 destroyers. Airplanes based on the light cruiser "Sidney" made 147 aircraft sorties in 2 days.⁸

During the war in Vietnam, the U.S. carrier-based aviation was employed for attacking coastal objects with even greater intensity. Each month this made from 2,000 to 8,000 aircraft sorties.⁹ According to the official American data, their total number in 1965-1971 was 750,000.¹⁰ As in Korea, along with military objectives, residential districts of large cities and villages, schools and pagodas, levees and dams were intentionally destroyed.

The carrier-based strike forces and formations were concentrated 20-35 miles off the Vietnamese coast in two combat maneuvering areas: in the Gulf of Tonkin (the basic one) and on the latitude of the South Vietnamese port of Nha Trang. The attacks from them were made to a depth of up to 400 miles.

The combat maneuvering of the carriers in the station areas was carried out in dispersed battle formations with cover fighters on standing patrol in the air in the aim of ASW, antiship and antimine defense. The raids were made employing diverse tactical procedures: massed attacks were made against the same objectives by large groups of aviation from different directions and altitudes, with the side employment of feint and diverting groups and maneuvers while against others the attacks were made by individual aircraft operating at low and maximum-low altitudes (100 m and less). The appearance of modern electronic equipment on the ground attack planes of the "Intruder" class increased the intensity of their employment during darkness and under bad weather conditions.

The naval artillery also attacked shore installations with massed strikes. They, like the air strikes, most often assumed the form of systematic operations. For ensuring the accuracy of nighttime firing and with bad visibility, radar buoys were set out in the area of the firing positions and during the day fire was corrected with the aid of airplanes or helicopters.

Missile boats were actively employed along with the large gunships.

The missile boats were used particularly intensely by the aggressors in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. Virtually every night they participated in raids on the coast of Syria and Egypt and attacked the oil tank farms radar and anti-aircraft missile positions and various installations in the regions of the ports of Latakia, Baniyas, Tartus, Damietta, Port Said, Rosetta and Alexandria. The effectiveness of the boat operations against the shore was increased as the Western press has pointed out, by well organized refueling of them at sea. As a result the missile boats of the "Saar" and "Reshef" class were able to increase their range from 300-400 miles to 1,000 miles from the Israeli coast.¹¹

During the Anglo-Argentine conflict, the basic tasks of attacking the shore objectives were carried out by carrier-launched aviation. It bombed airfields, military bases and port facilities, the positions of ground forces and radars, administrative centers on the islands and other installations, and in the aim of misleading the enemy, points where troops were not to be landed. The ships of the aggressors periodically made artillery and missile attacks against shore installations. In the event of extreme necessity, the Royal Navy was ready to employ nuclear weapons against the coast, chiefly for destroying the Argentine airfields.

In the course of the recent events in Lebanon, American imperialists undertook fierce shelling of its coast and mountain regions. For carrying out this mission the battleship "New Jersey" was specially taken out of the Naval Reserve and urgently shifted to the shores of Lebanon.

In the combat operations of a fleet against the coast a significant place has been held by *fire support for the ground forces fighting on the coastal sections of the front*. The naval artillery here carry out missions of destroying enemy personnel, demoralizing its troops, neutralizing firing points and positions and destroying permanent defensive works.

One of the particular features of support by ships for ground forces in Vietnam, as is felt, is their joint actions with marines under difficult geographic conditions (in the coastal zone, in shallows and rivers). In 1966, for the first time Americans formed a river fleet which was entrusted with the missions of supporting the ground forces, primarily the marines, as well as monitoring navigation in the Mekong River Delta.

In the landing of the English amphibious force on the Falkland (Malvinas) Islands, a strong fire strike was made only against the spurious landing areas and also the enemy troops on the Port Stanley area. Here fire correction was carried out from observation posts positioned on prevailing heights or from helicopters. The aircraft was guided to the target by air spotters who were in the battle formations of the subunits.

In the course of the landing and the operations of the amphibious force on the islands, the ships undertook surprise (this was aided by darkness) sorties to various parts of the coast and opened massed fire against previously designated and reconnoitered targets and they frequently employed the maneuvering of fire.

The Harrier type aircraft and helicopters armed with missile and machine gun weapons also operated successfully, in the estimate of the English Command.

Thus, foreign specialists consider that in the course of local wars and military conflicts, the operations of aggressor naval forces against the coast occupied a main place. Here carrier-based aviation was the main means for carrying out the combat missions. Naval artillery also did not lose its importance. In its development there has been a tendency to develop automatic medium- and small-caliber systems. They can be employed with almost equal success in fire support for the ground forces, against light enemy naval forces and for combating enemy aviation. The missile boats also possess great combat capabilities.

For conducting military operations against a coast in local wars, the aggressors have established large ship groupings which include among others large surface vessels including aircraft carriers and recently nuclear submarines.

The greatest hopes have been placed on the bomber and missile-carrying aviation, predominantly ship-based. Airplanes have been used not only for supporting ship operations but also for making massed strikes against military-industrial installations deep in the territory. Air supremacy in the combat area or the loss of it ultimately determined the results of operations by the naval forces against the coast and as a consequence of this have had a determining influence on the course and outcome of the entire war.

In the local wars and military conflicts of recent years, new weapons have been used more and more and the tactical procedures of their employment have been improved. Thus, during the Anglo-Argentine military conflict, the hitting of ships (vessels) and shore targets was often carried out with cruise missiles. ECM means were widely employed. The increased pace of landing as well as the achieving of surprise landings frequently were attained by using high-speed, shallow-draft boats and helicopters. Here the troops were landed on the shore using helicopters directly from the ships and container vessels which had been reequipped as helicopter carriers. There has also been a tendency to increase the marine units in the naval forces.

The development of the naval forces of the imperialist states in recent years has been subordinate to increasing their offensive potential. For these purposes the United States has developed and is continuing to improve its "Rapid Deployment Forces," it is building nuclear carriers and is modernizing and arming battleships of the "Iowa" class and other classes of vessels with cruise missile. Great attention is also being given to improving the ship and aviation weapons and equipment.

The actual employment of naval forces against the coast in local wars and the development trends of the fleets of the imperialist states, as foreign reviewers consider, are not only of theoretical historical interest but also of practical interest.

FOOTNOTES

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- ³ ZARUBEZHNOYE VOYENNOYE OBOZRENIYE, No 9, 1980, p 12.
- ⁴ PRAVDA, 13 Marcy 1984.
- ⁵ Ibid., 22 March, 4 and 9 April [1984]; KRASNAYA ZVEZDA, 22 March 1984; SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA, 8 April 1984.
- ⁶ A. M. Gakkel', A. N. Zamchalov, and K. V. Penzin, "Istoriya voyenno-morskogo iskusstva" [The History of Naval Art], Leningrad, Izd. Voenno-morskoy akademii, 1980, p 407.
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BIBLIOGRAPHIC DATA ON KHALKHIN-GOL HEROES OUTLINED

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[Article by Col (Ret) N. Rumyantsev: "Literature on the Heroes of the Soviet Union Who Distinguished Themselves in Battles on the Khalkhin-Gol"]

[Text] In the heroic chronicle of the Soviet Armed Forces, the engagement on the Khalkhin-Gol River holds a special place. Here in 1939, the men of the Red Army, loyal to their international duty, came to the aid of the fraternal Mongolian people and with the soldiers of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Army, dealt a crushing defeat to the Japanese militarists who had invaded Mongolian territory. The world was again convinced of the might of the Soviet Union, the invincibility of its army and the strength of the friendship between the Soviet and Mongolian peoples.

Since the time of the Khalkhin-Gol events decades have passed but the memory of them is still alive. In the course of the battles, the Soviet and Mongolian troops showed mass heroism and some of them performed outstanding feats. These were properly respected by the Soviet government. By the ukases of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet of 29 August and 17 November 1939 and 3 June 1940, more than 17,000 soldiers, commanders and political workers received orders and medals. Some 70 men were awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union while the pilots Majors S. I. Gritsevets and G. P. Kravchenko and Corps Commander Ya. V. Smushkevich were awarded a second Gold Star. They became our nation's first Twice Heroes of the Soviet Union. Order of the USSR were presented to 26 formations, units and subunits.

The life and feats of the Heroes of the Soviet Union who participated in the battles on the Khalkhin-Gol have been treated differently. Sound monographs, essays and journal articles have been written about some, others have just been mentioned in individual publications while the names of still others have been preserved only in the archival documents. In all of this, the literary sources on the Khalkhin-Gol heroes are rather diverse. They are described in more than 150 books of the central, republic, kray and oblast publishing houses.

Books have been written about the Twice Heroes of the Soviet Union S. I. Gritsevets, G. P. Kravchenko and Ya. V. Smushkevich.¹ Individual works have also come out from the republic and oblast publishing houses on the Heroes of the

Soviet Union, the Tank Brig Cmdr M. P. Yakovlev and the tank battalion commander Capt G. Ya. Borisenko, the chief of staff of the battalion Capt M. A. Lukin and the pilots Sr Lt V. G. Rakov and Capt Ye. N. Stepanov.² Mar SU G. K. Zhukov, Army Gen I. I. Fedyuninskiy and Maj Gen Avn B. A. Smirnov have published their memoirs where a great deal of attention was given to the battles on the Khalkhin-Gol.³

Of great value are the materials written immediately after the battles by their direct participants. Among such works are the articles by the Heroes of the Soviet Union published in the book "Boi u Khalkhin-Gola" [Battles by the Khalkhin-Gol] published in Moscow by Voenizdat in 1940.⁴ This book also contains vivid, just essays on the Khalkhin-Gol heroes written by the well-known writers and journalists V. Stavskiy, N. Kruzhkov, L. Slavin and others.⁵

A predominant majority of the authors has been conscientious in preparing their works, having used various sources for this including the documents of archives and museums, the personal files of the officers and generals, the published literature as well as the notes of conversations with the heroes themselves, their relatives and fellow servicemen. For example, this was done by Doctor of Historical Sciences Z. Sh. Yanguzov in preparing an essay on the life of the well-known military leader, Col Gen G. M. Shtern. The essay was written in a vivid literary language and is full of interesting factual material.⁶

The memoirs of I. I. Fedyuninskiy "Podnyatyeye po trevoge" [On the Alert], B. A. Smirnov "Ot Madrida do Khalkhin-Gola" [From Madrid to the Khalkhin-Gol], the books of G. K. Semenov "Ispanskiy zakal" [Spanish Tempering] and "Tovarishch Sergio" [Comrade Sergio] (on S. I. Gritsevets) and S. Shingarev "Pod nami Khalkhin-Gol" [Khalkhin-Gol Beneath Us] (on Ye. N. Stepanov), by V. Ya. Zil'manovich "Na orbite bol'shoy zhizni" [In the Orbit of a Great Life] (on Ya. V. Smushkevich) and by V. Ya. Yakovlev and G. Ustyuzhanin "General Kravchenko" [General Kravchenko] are marked by a profundity of research and by a completeness and reliability of the facts. These documentary works written drawing on various sources, including the personal files and archival documents, truly recreate the historical events, the feats of the heroes and their characters are vividly described and the engrossing pictures of the struggle against the enemy are widely set forth. The authors have dealt carefully with the facts and have carried out extensive research.

Although not devoid of errors of a factual sort, attention should be given to the memoirs of M. V. Vorotnikov "Zapiski ad'yutanta" [Notes of an Adjutant] in which many lines are devoted to G. K. Zhukov.⁷ Interesting essays have also been published in the collections of the central and local publishing houses on S. I. Gritsevets, G. P. Kravchenko, Ya. V. Shushkevich, M. P. Agibalov, A. P. Bosov, A. V. Kottsov, M. A. Lukin, A. N. Moskovskiy, P. Ye. Ponomarev, V. G. Rakhov, G. M. Shtern, V. F. Skobarikhin and certain other heroes.⁸

The authors, as a rule, have traced the entire life of the heroes. And this is correct, since the biographies of these people are interesting and instructive in many regards. A majority of them studied in the plant-factory training schools and prior to induction into the army were employed at plants and factories. From their youth they lived independently, providing not only for themselves but also helping their parents. In the labor collectives they developed

physically and spiritually. In the Pioneer detachments, the Komsomol and party cells their ideological conviction was forged, discipline and organization were developed in steady, daily labor, will power was instilled and a love for the motherland strengthened. All these qualities were fully apparent under the unusual circumstances which required the carrying out of a high military feat. In describing the use of their heroes, the authors of the books and essays urge our youth to learn from the Khalkhin-Gol heroes industriousness, the honest fulfillment of civil duty and love for the motherland.⁹

The men of Khalkhin-Gol who received the title of Hero of the Soviet Union also fought on the fronts of the Great Patriotic War. They can be encountered on the steppes of the Ukraine, in the tundra of the Arctic, in the forests of Belorussia, on the banks of the Volga, in the fields around Moscow and in the mountains of the Caucasus. For this reason we cannot consider as complete the works of those authors who have restricted the scope of their essays on the heroes who have lived a great life and have great combat experience to just the Khalkhin-Gol events.¹⁰

In the ranks of the Heroes of the Soviet Union who participated in the battles on the Khalkhin-Gol, a worthy place is also held by the political workers, including: the commissar of the 22d Fighter Air Regiment V. N. Kalachev, the battalion commissars A. V. Kottsov, A. N. Moskovskiy, P. A. Skopin and A. I. Suvorov, and the company political instructors A. I. Kiselev and V. I. Tikhonov. By the passionate word of a communist and by the personal example of valor and courage, they indoctrinated the soldiers and commanders in a spirit of intrepidity, hate for the enemy, loyalty to international duty and dedication to the motherland. The commissars were active proponents of our party's ideas. They did a great deal to strengthen discipline, order and organization in the units and subunits. The questions of everyday routine and supplying the units and subunits with food, fuel and ammunition were always within the view of the political workers. In difficult moments of combat the commissar was always next to the men for whom he had a warm word and good advice. The men loved the commissars and along with them went boldly into battle and vanquished the enemy.

Among the materials published on the hero political workers in the collections of the oblast publishing houses, the essay by M. Yarygin "Commissar Suvorov" stands out in its informativeness.¹¹

Among the authors of books and essays on the heroes of Khalkhin-Gol are direct participants in the battles who personally knew the heroes of their works. Their works excel in the reliability of the described events, accuracy of the descriptions of the fellow servicemen and professional competence. For example, these include the memoirs of the former squadron commissar of the 22d Fighter Air Regiment, now Twice Hero of the Soviet Union, Maj Gen Avn (Ret) A. V. Vorozheykin "Istrebiteli" [Fighters].¹² In his book he had many warm words to say about his combat comrades at Khalkhin-Gol G. P. Kravchenko, S. I. Gritsevets, I. I. Krasnoyarchenko, N. G. Glazynin, N. V. Grinev, V. N. Kalachev, T. F. Kutsevalov and V. P. Trubachenko.

However, not all the works about the Khalkhin-Gol heroes meet the high demands placed on such documentary works. Unfortunately, there are publications which abound in serious factual errors and inaccuracy. For example, among these is

the pamphlet of I. I. Kuznetsov "Podvigi geroyev Khalkhin-Gola" [Feats of the Khalkhin-Gol Heroes] published in 1969 in Ulan-Ude. The pamphlet gives biographic information on the heroes taken from the official documents as well as copies of the requests for decorations from the holdings of the Central State Archives of the Soviet Army. The biographic information, unfortunately, contains many erroneous facts. The author writes that I. V. Prosolov was awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union posthumously (p 69), while the hero remained alive, returned to his home village of Aleksandrovka in the Sumi area and died 20 years later, on 27 April 1959.¹³ The pamphlet states that V. N. Kozhukhov was born in the village of Melyen in Minsk Oblast (p 56), while in reality his birthplace was the village of Meylyn in Mtsenskiy Rayon of Orel Oblast. Similar discrepancies also occur in the biographical information on V. I. Artamonov, N. N. Zayyul'yev, M. S. Kochetov, G. M. Mikhaylov, Ye. Ye. Moroz, M. P. Noga, N. Z. Popov, P. A. Skopin, A. I. Suborov and V. A. Aminev. In addition, the author has made mistakes in the birthdates of many heroes as well as other factual errors.

Also among the clearly unsuccessful books founded on guesses and imagination is the documentary tale by the Chita journalist Yu. Kurts "Tovarishch kombrig" [Comrade Brigade Commander] published in 1982 by the East Siberian Book Publishing House.¹⁴ The small-sized publication gives very inaccurately the biography of Brig Cmdr M. P. Yakovlev and the image of the hero is distorted. Our press has rightly pointed this out.¹⁵

There are numerous factual inaccuracies also in the collections of essays on the Khalkhin-Gol heroes published by the oblast book publishing houses. Thus, the collection "Zolotyie Zvezdy kurgantsev" [The Gold Stars of the Kurgan Fighters] describes the involvement of A. I. Kiselev in the battles on Mount Bain-Tsagan on 3-5 July 1939.¹⁶ Actually A. I. Kiselev did not participate in these battles and his company on 3-5 July was supporting the 9th Motorized Armored Brigade on the east bank of the Khalkhin-Gol River.¹⁷

In the book "Vsegda v stroyu" [Always in Formation], in the essay "Through Storms and Thunder," P. B. Baturkin describes how the armored units of the Southern Group headed by Col M. F. Terekhin attacked the Japanese on Finger Hill. This hill was in the zone of advance of the Northern Group of Forces and not the Southern. The units led by M. F. Terekhin were fighting in a completely different place, in the area of Big Sands, Green and Sandy Hills.¹⁸

Such examples could be continued, however the above-given are fully sufficient to conclude that certain authors have depicted the desired as the real, a clear fantasy as an irrefutable fact, thereby distorting, whether they wished to or not, the historical truth.

Over the four and a half decades, great work has been done to propagandize and popularize the feats of the Heroes of the Soviet Union who won glory for their names on the banks of the Khalkhin-Gol, but this is still not complete.

Up to now not only books but not even small essays in collections and journals have been written about many heroes. For example, in the four books on the Heroes of the Soviet Union coming from Donets Oblast and published by the Donbass Izdatelstvo [Publishing House] in 1972-1976,¹⁹ space has not been found

for essays on their fellow countryman from the village of Volodarskoy, Lt Gen Avn (Res) A. D. Yakimenko. In the collections of essays on the local heroes published by a number of the oblast and republic publishing houses, no materials are to be found on the Khalghin-Gol Heroes of the Soviet Union K. N. Abramov, N. S. Zadorin, I. M. Remizov (Leningrad), V. I. Artamonov (Chelyabinsk), A. F. Vasil'yev (Astrakhan), L. M. Voyevodin (Kursk), N. V. Grinev, V. N. Kozhukhov (Orel), N. N. Zayyul'yev, T. F. Kutsevalov (Dnepropetrovsk), M. S. Kochetov (Vladimir), N. P. Il'chenko (Uzbekistan), V. A. Koptsov (Georgia), G. M. Mikhaylov, M. P. Yakovlev (Novgorod) and S. T. Podnavoznov (Ulyanovsk).²⁰ The documentary works on the Heroes of the Soviet Union, their lives and feats are of enormous indoctrinational significance. Such books are read by millions of young men and women. They take their example from the heroes, they endeavor to equal them, they learn love for the motherland from them and to fight for the great cause of the Leninist party and for happiness and peace in the world. The authors and publishing houses should always keep in mind this high purpose of heroic patriotic subjects in preparing materials on the Heroes of the Soviet Union.

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BOOK ON HISTORY OF FIRST GUARDS UNIT REVIEWED

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[Review by Col A. Degtyarev of the book "V boyakh rozhdennaya" (Born in Battle) by I. N. Russiyanov, Moscow, Voenizdat, 1982, 253 pages]

[Text] At the International Book Fair in Moscow in 1983, the visitors' attention was drawn to a book published by Voenizdat on the first Soviet guardsman who participated in the heroic battles against the Nazi invaders during the Great Patriotic War [the book reviewed].

The book deals with the birth of the Soviet guards. On 18 September 1941, by an Order of the USSR People's Commissar of Defense the 100th Order of Lenin Rifle Division was given the title of guards. At that time it was engaged in heavy battles at Yelnya. In fierce clashes with the enemy, the men of the formation showed examples of courage and valor, iron discipline and high military skill.

The recently deceased commander of the division, Lt Gen I. N. Russiyanov, who fought with the division during the entire war, was also the author of these informative military memoirs. This further increases their value giving the reader an opportunity to learn about the combat deeds of the guardsmen not only from a simple witness of events but also from a person who directly led the combat operations of the division's units. The informative and indoctrinational importance of the book is further increased due to the approaching 40th anniversary of the Great Victory.

The 100th Rifle Division had a glorious combat history. Organized during the years of the military reform as a territorial formation, it later became a regular one. During the Soviet-Finnish War, the division participated in the battles on the Karelian Isthmus. It distinguished itself in breaking through the Mannerheim Line and was awarded the Order of Lenin.

The war with Nazi Germany caught the 100th Rifle Division at Minsk as part of the Western Special Military District. Here, in the area of Ostroshitskiy Gorodok, it formed up and assumed the defensive with the mission of halting the enemy tanks pushing toward the capital of Soviet Belorussia.

Lt Gen I. N. Russiyanov on the pages of the book relates in detail how the personnel of the units under his command carried out this difficult mission, how the young soldiers went through their first combat baptism in fire and how they matured and were tempered in the battles against the Nazi invaders.

In the battles around Minsk, the men of the division were in a situation where the existing antitank weapons were not sufficient to cover all the likely tank approaches. And then the commander remembered that the Nazi tanks burned excellently if one used bottles filled with gasoline. Hence, it was essential to prepare as quickly as possible the packaging, the fuel and then fill the bottles. The division quickly collected the glass water bottles and empty bottles were brought from Minsk. They were immediately filled with gasoline. In all the units, groups of volunteers were organized who would hunt the tanks. Their training was organized. Thus the subunits in a short period of time were armed with "hand glass artillery."

Thus combat commenced.... The enemy tanks were already flattening out the trenches. Then one after another the enemy vehicles began to smoke. While the tank hunters set them afire, the other men mowed down the enemy infantry with rifle and machine gun fire. The Nazis, unable to hold out, turned back.

One also remembers the article reproduced in the book from the frontline newspaper KRASNOARMEYSKAYA PRAVDA on the feat of the Red Armyman I. P. Kavun who received the Order of Lenin.

The reader cannot remain indifferent to the pages which relate the breaking out of the division from an encirclement and the heavy battles against superior enemy forces which lasted almost an entire month. For the exemplary fulfillment of the orders of the command and for the valor and courage shown by the soldiers and the commanders in battle, two regiments of the division were awarded orders. The motherland recognized the feats of many men of the formation with high governmental decorations.

The author describes in detail one of the first offensive operations conducted by the Soviet Army, the Yelnya, in which the 100th Rifle Division participated. Precisely during these battles, its soldiers, showing high moral-combat qualities and unrestrained offensive drive, won the honorific right to be called guardsmen. The experience of the first clashes with the Nazi hordes which invaded Soviet land was not in vain for them. They learned to hit the enemy strongly, by bold maneuver to seize it in iron claws and destroy it.

In the course of the Yelnya Operation our men learned how to break through the enemy defenses, to crush a strong Nazi grouping and liberate a portion of the territory captured by it, including the town of Yelnya. Here an important role was played by the 100th Rifle Division which became the 1st Guards Rifle Division of the Soviet Army.

When the historic battle of Moscow got underway, the glorious formation again took its place in the first echelon of the Soviet troops which went over to the counteroffensive. The guardsmen made a major contribution to defeating the Nazi Army at the walls of our capital.

Lt Gen Russiyanov in the book describes these memorable engagements and the further campaign record of the division which attacked the enemy in the Donets Basin, on the Hungarian Plain and on the streets of the Austrian capital of Vienna.

The book "V boyakh rozhdannaya" is a vivid and at the same time convincing description of the fierce battles and difficult campaigns and of the difficult and dangerous military service of the Soviet soldier who held out, checked the fierce thrust of the enemy and finally arrived at victory. Characteristically, the numerous descriptions of the battles are very diverse. As was the case in the war, no battle was like another and each was in its own way instructive.

A distinguishing feature of the entire narration is the clear and convincing demonstration of how the military skill of the soldiers grew in battle. In describing what boldness and initiative and the skillful mastery of the weapons and combat equipment meant in the war, the author sketches the path of the men to the heights of combat skill.

The men of the 1st Guards Rifle Division with honor carried their guards colors with the portrait of V. I. Lenin over the front roads. All the frontline units endeavored to equal them and follow their example. Their feats are now an inspiring example of carrying out military and patriotic duty for the present-day generation of the defenders of the socialist fatherland.

At present in our Armed Forces there are also guards units and formations. The heirs of the combat glory of the frontline veterans, the guardsmen of the 1980's, are sacredly maintaining and adding to the traditions of their fathers and grandfathers. In fighting to constantly increase combat readiness and in showing unflagging vigilance, they day by day are improving their skill, they are constantly mastering the modern combat equipment and are strengthening discipline and prescribed order.

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BIOGRAPHIC DATA ON ADMIRAL I. S. ISAKOV GIVEN

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 8, Aug 84 (signed to press 24 Jul 84) pp 85-88

[Article by Flt Adm N. Sergeyev: "Flt Adm SU I. S. Isakov (On the Occasion of His 90th Birthday)"]

[Text] Ivan Stepanovich Isakov is known in our nation as one of the prominent Soviet naval figures who dedicated 50 years of his life to the organizational development of the Soviet fleet and to the strengthening of its combat might. Over this time he moved from cadet to Fleet Admiral of the Soviet Union, taking an active part in the Civil and Great Patriotic Wars.

I. S. Isakov was born on 10 (22) August 1894 in the village of Adzhikent (now Azerbaijan) in a family of a railroad employee. In 1903, the Isakov family moved to Tiflis and the parents placed the 9-year-old boy in "real school" [high school].

It is hard to say when the boy born far from the sea developed a dream of becoming a sailor. But over time it became so strong that it influenced the choice of his further career. After completing secondary school, Ivan Isakov in September 1914 entered the separate cadet classes. Here the young man began to master the principles of naval theory and practice and to become familiar with the heroic history of the Russian Fleet.

In March 1917, WO ["michman"] Isakov began his independent life and became a sailor. A little more than 6 months later, when the young officer already had behind him his first months of independent service in the mining division of the Baltic Sea on the destroyer "Izyaslav" and had participated in battles against the Germans off the Monsund Islands, the Great October Socialist Revolution broke out in Russia. With his heart and mind WO Isakov realized that historical truth was on the side of the people and the future was with them. He devoted himself completely to serving the interests of the workers and actively defended the young Soviet republic.

Important events in the naval biography of the young officer were his participation in the spring of 1918 in the Ice Campaign on the destroyer "Izyaslav" from Helsingfors to Kronshtadt as part of the last group of ships and in repelling an attack on Kronshtadt by English torpedo boats in August 1919. In May 1920,

another severe testing befell Isakov and he participated in the Enzeliya Operation of defeating the English interventionists and White Guards in the Caspian, showing, as before, great courage and good naval skills.

During further service on the Baltic and Black Sea Fleets, I. S. Isakov gained great practical experience and political tempering. During these years, the general viewpoint of the future navy leader was greatly broadened, his knowledge in the area of shipbuilding, naval tactics and operational art was enriched, while his command skills and authority among the personnel grew. Here is an excerpt from the certification of I. S. Isakov (1924-1925) who at that time was the commander of the destroyer "Petrovskiy" [Black Sea Fleet]: "The person being certified is a man of strong will, great energy and efficiency, and analyzes a situation excellently. He is demanding in his dealings with subordinates in service.... He is disciplined and restrained....

"He is well developed and has a colossal capacity for work. He carries out each job assigned him with exceptional conscientiousness and knowledge of the job.

"Among his subordinate commanders and crew he has great authority, respect and affection."

Close contact with the personnel and an interest in the daily life of his subordinates and in their labor under the most diverse conditions and situations made it possible for him to delve deeply into the psychology of the sailors, to know well their needs and requests and to show constant concern for them combined with reasonable demandingness and tactful dealing with them.

On 20 July 1927, I. S. Isakov was admitted as a student on the Courses for the Advanced Training of Higher Supervisory Personnel of the Navy Under the Naval Academy and these he completed in 1928. After this Ivan Stepanovich for a short period of time served on the staff of the Black Sea Fleet (he temporarily performed the duties of the chief of staff of the Black Sea Naval Forces) and then on the RKKA [Worker-Peasant Red Army] Staff. From March 1932 through January 1933 and from October 1935 through January 1937, he worked as an instructor at the Naval Academy.

In 1933, I. S. Isakov headed the Special-Purpose Expedition (EON) to escort the first ships from the Baltic to the Barents Sea for establishing the Northern Fleet there. After this he was twice appointed Navy Chief of Staff of the Baltic Sea (from October 1933 through August 1935 and from January through August 1937). In August 1937, I. S. Isakov became the commander of the Red Banner Baltic Fleet. In his new position he did a great deal to improve the level of combat and political training for the personnel of the fleet's ships and units.

In January 1938, I. S. Isakov was appointed the deputy, and in April 1939, the first deputy people's commissar of the USSR Navy. In June 1940, he was given the military rank of admiral and in November he was appointed chief of the Main Naval Staff.



During the prewar years, I. S. Isakov together with other military leaders worked on generalizing the historical experience of the organizational development of the Soviet Navy. Under his leadership and considering the development trends in the naval forces both in our nation and among our probable enemies, new "Field Manual of the RKKA Naval Forces" and "Manual for Conducting Naval Operations" were worked out and published.

I. S. Isakov showed particularly strong naval and organizational talent during the years of the Great Patriotic War. From July through October 1941, Adm Isakov was the deputy commander-in-chief for naval affairs and a military council member for the Northwestern Sector. Holding this position, he "devoted a great deal of energy to the immediate strengthening of the defenses of Leningrad and the Lake Region and, in particular, to using naval artillery and aviation and to organizing the naval infantry units," wrote Flt Adm SU S. G. Gorshkov about his [Isakov's] activities during this period. "He was a supporter of the active employment of the fleet and was the initiator of landings on Ladoga and in the Gulf of Finland."¹

Upon the orders of Hq SHC, at the end of October 1941, I. S. Isakov returned to Moscow where he began to carry out responsible assignments on the central staff of the USSR People's Commissariat of the Navy. During this time he was greatly concerned with generalizing combat experience for the first months of the war and introducing this in the fleets.

In April 1942, I. S. Isakov was appointed deputy commander-in-chief and military council member of the Northern Caucasus Sector, and in August, the deputy commander and military council member of the Transcaucasian and Caucasian Front. He devoted a great deal of attention to coordinating the actions of the fleet and the ground forces in defending Sevastopol and Novorossiysk and to protecting the sea lines of communications.

On 4 October 1942, during a regular trip to the forward positions, Ivan Stepanovich was severely wounded in the left thigh. Only due to the great care and high professional skill of the Soviet military physicians did they succeed in saving him from incipient gas gangrene, but the leg had to be amputated. Iron will power and total dedication to the motherland and the beloved fleet helped I. S. Isakov surmount all the hardships involved with his disability for a long time to remain in military service.

In 1944-1945, Ivan Stepanovich Isakov who on 31 May 1944 was awarded the rank of fleet admiral was a member of the governmental commission for preparing the German surrender conditions. From February 1946 through February 1947, he was again the chief of the Main Naval Staff. In February 1947, he was appointed the deputy commander-in-chief of the Navy for studying and utilizing the experience of the Great Patriotic War. From March 1950 through February 1956,

¹ "Admiral Flota Sovetskogo Soyuza Ivan Stepanovich Isakov. Sbornik dokumentov i materialov" [Flt Adm SU Ivan Stepanovich Isakov. Collection of Documents and Materials], Yerevan, Izd-vo AN Armyanskoy SSR, 1975, p 341.

I. S. Isakov was retired (because of health). At the same time he (from 1954 through 1955) held the position of deputy minister of the Navy. From February 1956 through April 1958, I. S. Isakov was again in a leading job in the USSR Ministry of Defense. From April 1958, he was a general inspector of the Group of General Inspectors of the Ministry of Defense. Regardless of his severe illness, Ivan Stepanovich devoted a great deal of strength and energy to further increasing the combat might of the Soviet Navy and to developing its operational art and tactics.

I. S. Isakov was the author of numerous scientific works on military history, military and naval art. He also has written a number of literary works on the navy (stories and essays). In May 1958, I. S. Isakov was elected a corresponding member of the USSR Academy of Sciences, and in March 1967, an honorary member of the Armenian Academy of Sciences. He was a winner of the USSR State Prize (1951).

On 3 March 1955, I. S. Isakov was awarded the military rank of Fleet Admiral of the Soviet Union with the presenting of a "Marshal's Star," and in May 1965 was given the title of Hero of the Soviet Union.

I. S. Isakov was elected a deputy of the USSR Supreme Soviet, First Sitting. For great services to the motherland he received six Orders of Lenin, three Orders of the Red Banner, two Orders of Ushakov First Degree, the Order of the Patriotic War First Degree, the Order of the Red Star and many medals.

Ivan Stepanovich Isakov died on 11 October 1967 in Moscow. He was buried at Novodevichi Cemetery. One of the ships of the Soviet Navy bears his name.

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BIOGRAPHIC DATA ON AIR MARSHAL A. YE. GOLOVANOV PROVIDED

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 8, Aug 84 (signed to press 24 Jul 84) pp 88-90

[Article by Hero of the Soviet Union, Col Gen Avn (Ret) S. Ushakov:
"Ch Mar Avn A. Ye. Golovanov (On the Occasion of His 80th Birthday)"]

[Text] Aleksandr Yevgen'yevich Golovanov* was born on 7 August 1904 in Nizhniy Govgorod (now Gorkiy) in the family of a worker of the river navigation company. The 15-year-old youth volunteered for the Red Army and fought against the White Guard units of Denikin. Upon the end of the Civil War, he completed secondary school. He joined the VKP(b) [All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik)] in 1929.

When he was 28 years old, he realized his dream, having successfully completed flight school under the TsAGI [Central Aerohydrodynamics Institute] in Moscow and became a flyer. Initially he was a pilot and later a commander of an air detachment, the chief of the Eastern Siberian Administration of the GVF [Civil Air Fleet], and from 1938, the chief pilot of Aeroflot.

In 1939, during the events on the Khalghin-Gol River, Aleksandr Yevgen'yevich participated in carrying out special combat assignments. For courage and heroism shown here he was awarded the Order of the Red Banner. For distinguished service in the Soviet-Finnish War he was awarded the Order of Lenin.

Aleksandr Yevgen'yevich became a career military man not long before the start of the Great Patriotic War. On the basis of the experience of the Soviet-Finnish War, it was considered essential to begin working on mastering flights in clouds using radio equipment in order to minimize the dependence of combat aviation upon meteorological conditions. For these purposes, two higher navigator schools were founded and the corresponding decisions were taken to quickly outfit the bombers with the required radio equipment and primarily the RPK-2 Chayka radio fixed-loop radio compass.

At this time, A. Ye. Golovanov wrote a letter to I. V. Stalin in which, on the basis of his personal combat experience, he established the need to take

* For more detail on A. Ye. Golovanov, see: VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 8, 1974, pp 125-128.

In February 1941, the 212th Separate Air Regiment armed with DB-3f planes was organized in Smolensk. For quickly carrying out the task, a group of pilots already experienced in such flights was called in from the GVF. The command as well as all the navigator and engineer-technical personnel was recruited from career military personnel. A. Ye. Golovanov was appointed the regiment's commander with the awarding of the rank of lieutenant colonel. Intense training commenced. But the combat alert which sounded at dawn of 22 June interrupted the peacetime flights and the 212th Air Regiment on the very first day of the war engaged the enemy.

In July-August 1941, at the airfields around Moscow a separate 81st Air Division consisting of three regiments was organized. In August A. Ye. Golovanov was appointed the commander of this division.

Regardless of the exceptionally difficult situation developing on the Soviet-German Front, Golovanov obtained time from the Superior Command necessary to bring the regiments to combat readiness, after which the division participated in active operations, attacking enemy troops on the near approaches to Moscow. Prior to 1 January 1942, it had made around 1,000 aircraft sorties.

In the spring of 1942, the DBA [Long-Range Bomber Aviation] was transformed into the Long-Range Aviation [ADD]. A. Ye. Golovanov was appointed its commander and given the rank of lieutenant general aviation. During this period the organizational abilities of A. Ye. Golovanov were clearly apparent. His inherent boldness in taking decisions, decisiveness and stubbornness in carrying them out helped to successfully and quickly implement such a difficult task as organizing the ADD. Aleksandr Yevgen'yevich possessed the ability to quickly pick up all that was new both in equipment and operational questions, he was exceptionally inquisitive and endeavored personally to study a question and get to its essence.

Let me give two examples. The pilots and navigators transferred to the ADD by the Air Forces flight schools had been trained for only daylight flights and considering that a flight or squadron commander would lead them into combat. But now it was essential to train them immediately for independent combat flights at night. It was hard to believe that in a short period of time it would be possible to train a combat pilot who could fly at night. But times did not permit delay and the commander took the solely correct decision: the training process which had developed over the years in the schools was not to be broken, rather just certain changes would be incorporated in it to train the combat crews. For this the higher navigator training schools which had been established prior to the war and had experienced instructors had to be changed into schools for the training of night crews. The practice of the very first flights concerned the correctness of such a system for training flight personnel and this was not altered up to the end of the war.

The switching of the ADD to nighttime operations was caused by the following considerations: by the possibility of conducting combat operations without the cover of fighters which as before were in short supply; by the advisability of systematic air operations against airfields when the daytime aviation was at them as well as against rail junctions and major stations, when they were operating most intensely; by the possibility of conducting combat operations to the full range of the airplane.

Here it was essential to resolve involved problems related to preventing aircraft collisions and mutual bomb damage with the simultaneous approach to the target by several crews and reducing losses on the bombing run from antiaircraft artillery fire. These major questions were correctly resolved. Moreover, the adopted formation of the airplanes along the route and the approach to the target remained unchanged until the war's end.

A high feeling of responsibility for the assigned job, discipline and initiative and a constant desire for the new and more advanced made it possible for A. Ye. Golovanov, as the ADD commander, from the very outset to win authority among the superior command as well as the affection and respect of subordinates. Accessibility and tact and the ability to hear out a person were characteristic traits of his. He always found time to devote attention to the men and their needs. Each visit to a unit, and he spent a good deal of time in the troops, always ended with a cordial talk with the flight personnel. A. Ye. Golovanov by a kind word and example indoctrinated the air fighters, instilling in them a desire and readiness to carry out the combat mission successfully under all circumstances, disregarding any danger.

In December 1944, the ADD was transformed into the 18th Air Army. Ch Mar Avn A. Ye. Golovanov was appointed its commander.

The army's formations attacked objectives deep in the enemy rear and also supported the ground troops in the course of the East Prussian, Vienna, Berlin and others operations and carried out missions of providing aid to the partisans and patriots of Yugoslavia.

During the years of the Great Patriotic War, under the immediate leadership of A. Ye. Golovanov, the ADD successfully carried out the missions confronting it. This is confirmation of the great abilities of A. Ye. Golovanov, his personal accomplishments and the accomplishments of his staff, the services and party-political apparatus, the commanders and personnel of the formations and units which he skillfully led.

After the Great Patriotic War, A. Ye. Golovanov continued serving in responsible positions in the Air Forces.

For courage shown and for successful leadership over the ADD formations, A. Ye. Golovanov was awarded two Orders of Lenin, three Orders of the Red Star, the Orders of Suvorov First Degree and the Red Star, many medals as well as foreign orders.

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BIOGRAPHIC DATA ON MARSHAL OF ARMORED TROOPS S. BOGDANOV GIVEN

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 8, Aug 84 (signed to press 24 Jul 84) pp 90-92

[Article by Lt Gen (Res) T. Otstavnoy: "Mar Armored Trps S. I. Bogdanov (On the Occasion of His 90th Birthday)"]

[Text] Mar Armored Trps Semen Il'ich Bogdanov had a glorious campaign record. He was born on 17 (29) August 1894 in St. Petersburg in a worker family. From the age of 12 he began to work. He worked at the Putilov Plant initially as an apprentice and later as a mechanic. In 1918, during the difficult year of the Civil War, S. I. Bogdanov volunteered for the Red Army. In commanding a platoon, company and battalion, he fought the White Poles and Antonov bands. For courage and bravery shown in battle, in 1920, he was awarded the Order of the Red Banner.

After the Civil War, Semen Il'ich commanded a rifle regiment and a mechanized training regiment, a mechanized brigade and a light tank brigade and a tank division; he completed the Higher Military Pedagogical School and the Higher Infantry-Tactical Courses and the Academy Advanced Training Courses Under the Military Academy of Mechanization and Motorization.

The Great Patriotic War found Col S. I. Bogdanov in the position of the commander of the 30th Tank Division of the XIV Mechanized Corps. Its forward subunits, in moving up to the front line, under the conditions of constant enemy air attack in the middle of the day of 22 June in 1941, counterattacked the head units of the Nazi 18th Tank Division to the northwest of Kobrin. In the course of the meeting engagement, the tank troops of the formation under the skillful leadership of S. I. Bogdanov caused serious damage to the Nazis and drove them back several kilometers to the west.

In the position of deputy commander of the 10th Army, Semen Il'ich participated in the Battle of Moscow.

In August 1942, the XII Tank Corps of the 3d Tank Army under the command of Maj Gen Tank Trps S. I. Bogdanov, in the course of a counterthrust by the Western Front against the Nazi 2d Tank Army, rapidly attacked the enemy and without a halt captured its major center of resistance Goskovo (to the south of Kozelsk).

During the period of the Stalingrad Battle, the formations of the VI Mechanized Corps under the command of Semen Il'ich, in December 1942, took an active part in defeating the Kotelnikovo grouping of Nazi troops.

The military skill of S. I. Bogdanov was particularly apparent in the position of commander of the 2a (later 2d Guards) Tank Army. His ability to quickly size up a situation and take bold decisions was clearly revealed in the period of the Uman-Botosani Operation. In operating as the mobile group of the Second Ukrainian Front, the 2d Tank Army together with the 27th Army on 5 March 1944 completed the breakthrough of the enemy defenses to the north of Uman and in cooperation with the XXIX Tank Corps of the 5th Guards Tank Army and the LXXIII Rifle Corps of the 52d Army on 10 March liberated Uman. Subsequently, regardless of the spring mud and lack of roads, the tank troops of the field force with motorized infantry on the armor, in accord with the order of the front's commander, began to pursue the enemy. The army fought its way around 240 km, crossing the southern Bug, Dnestr and Prut, and by the end of the operation had reached the approaches to the town of Iasi. For skillful leadership of the troops and for courage shown in this, S. I. Bogdanov was awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union.

In the summer of 1944, the 2d Tank Army committed to the breakthrough to the west of Kovel, by surprise rapid attacks and outflanking maneuvers, together with units of the 8th Guards Army, liberated Lublin. Then its troops liberated Deblin, they reached the Vistula, they turned abruptly to the north toward Warsaw and came out in the rear of the Brest enemy grouping. For bold and decisive actions, the army on 20 November 1944 became a guards unit.

Semen Il'ich in the Vistula-Oder Operation proved to be a talented organizer of deep tank thrusts. As part of the mobile group of the First Belorussian Front, the 2d Guards Tank Army under winter conditions in 15 days fought its way over 700 km from the Vistula to the Oder, showing here examples of bold, daring and rapid attacks against the enemy. Its formations were among the first to reach the frontier with Pomerania.

The feats of thousands of guardsmen were commended with orders and medals and many of them received the title of Hero of the Soviet Union. S. I. Bogdanov received his second Gold Star.

The outstanding organizational abilities and commander maturity of S. I. Bogdanov largely determined the successful operations of the 2d Guards Tank Army in the Berlin Operation. Together with other field forces, it was forced to cross the entire depth of the previously prepared enemy defenses. On 21 April, the army's main forces captured the northwestern outskirts of Berlin, and on 25 April, its IX Guards Tank Corps together with units from the 47th Army, linked up with the 4th Guards Tank Army of the First Ukrainian Front to the north of Potsdam. The Berlin enemy grouping was surrounded and the storming of the city commenced. The army commander personally and through his staff clearly directed the troops fighting on separate sectors. Of great importance was the presence of Semen Il'ich in the battle formations of the troops, his adjusting of the missions on the spot and his aid to the formation commanders.

The Communist Party and the Soviet government had high regard for the accomplishments of S. I. Bogdanov. He received two Orders of Lenin, four Orders of the Red Banner, the Orders of Suvorov First and Second Degree and many foreign orders and medals.

After the war, S. I. Bogdanov held the position of commander of the Armored and Mechanized Troops of the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany, he was the first deputy commander and commander of the armored and mechanized troops of the Soviet Army, the commander of a mechanized army and the chief of the Military Academy of the Armored Troops. In these positions he devoted all his knowledge and rich combat experience to the cause of the further development and improvement of the armored troops.

As a deputy to the USSR Supreme Soviet, Second-Fourth Sitzings, Semen Il'ich carried out great public work.

The life and activities of Mar Armored Trps S. I. Bogdanov and the glorious combat deeds of the troops led by him at present serve as an example for the new generations of tank troops.

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CENTRAL ASIAN MILITARY DISTRICT DISCUSSES HISTORY JOURNAL CONTENTS

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 8, Aug 84 (signed to press 24 Jul 84) pp 93-94

[Article by Col A. Raspolov: "The Experience of the Great Patriotic War--An Invaluable Wealth"]

[Text] In the Red Banner Central Asian Military District a conference was held for the readers of the journal. The generals and officers of the district staff and directorates, in assessing the materials published on the pages of the journal, voiced proposals and requests aimed at raising the scientific-theoretical level and broadening the range of articles.

The Chief of Staff and First Deputy District Commander, Lt Gen A. V. Kovtunov, in his comments took up the problems of the treatment of military history. He pointed out that in the articles published on the questions of military art during the years of the Great Patriotic War, more theoretical conclusions, generalizations and practical recommendations should be given making it possible to qualitatively carry out the tasks of troop combat and political training and maintaining the troops in constant combat readiness. It would be desirable to broaden the range of materials on the operations of our troops under the difficult conditions of the initial period of the war, in particular, in a forced retreat, in the defending of a broad front with small forces, in an encirclement as well as under the special conditions of a mountain-desert terrain and at night.

The historical experience of the Great Patriotic War shows that one of the factors in the success of an operation or engagement was command and control of the troops. In recent years, VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL has published a series of materials on this question. Unfortunately, Col A. P. Grigor'yev pointed out in his comments, such articles have basically been devoted to operations in the concluding period of the war. In our view, there would be great benefit from articles on the given problem in the initial period.

Generalizing the actual combat operations of the units and formations in 1941-1945, Col S. P. Tomashevskiy pointed out in his comments, is an important task of military history science. From the journal we expect a broad depiction of the experience of offensive and defensive combat by the units and formations, the preparation and conduct of combat operations by forward detachments,

organizing the fire plan and fire damage to the enemy, the conducting of counterattacks and so forth. The experience of specialist training and the forming of the subunits and units is valuable for us officers.

Maj Gen Art B. A. Plyshevskiy and Lt Col Yu. V. Shtyrov in their comments voiced requests for publishing more materials on the use of artillery, air defense troops and Engineer Troops under the conditions of a mountain-desert terrain. The heroism of the artillery troops, air defense troops and combat engineers should be more widely shown, disclosing here the tactics of the subunits and units and the positive experience of the commanders and political workers. This is essential for indoctrinating the personnel and the youth preparing for army service.

Cols L. D. Velikodnyy and V. I. Vilkov feel it advisable to broaden the range of materials analyzing the problems of Marxist-Leninist theory, the military policy of the Communist Party and the questions of party political work closely related to the tasks of indoctrinating the personnel under the conditions of an international situation which has become sharply exacerbated due to the fault of the aggressive imperialist forces headed by the United States. A desire was voiced to publish more materials on international and heroic-patriotic indoctrination, on the combat traditions of the Communist Party, the Soviet people and the Armed Forces.

Col N. S. Ust'yan proposed that the journal publish more materials on the experience of the armies of the socialist countries on questions of operational and combat training of the staffs and the organizing of combat support.

In his comments, Col V. N. Belanov took up the general problems of military history. He proposed that more articles be published on the questions of the development of the history of military art and materials unmasking the aggressive essence of imperialism and the bourgeois falsifiers of the history of the Great Patriotic War who have played down the role of our Armed Forces in the victory over Nazi Germany.

Lt Col A. S. Yelekhin commented on the great practical importance of publishing articles devoted to rear support for the operations during the war years. In his view, it would be advisable for the article to publish articles on the operation of the rear services of the units and formations in the course of an operation and on preparing the rear services reserve.

The district commander, Army Gen D. T. Yazov spoke at the conclusion of the conference. He emphasized that the party teaches us, the military personnel, to study the experience of the Great Patriotic War constantly and purposefully. Only on the basis of a thorough analysis of the relationship between events of the past and present is it possible to establish the dialectical succession in military affairs and on this basis creatively improve it and raise it to a new qualitative level. Here an important role is played by VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL which is popular among the commanders, staff officers, political workers and all the district personnel. Army Gen D. T. Yazov voiced a request that the journal's pages would contain more materials disclosing the experience of the commanders of fronts and armies, corps and divisions and staffs of various levels in the area of preparing for operations, organizing cooperation, command

and control of the troops and so forth. In the course of preparing for the important date of the 40th anniversary of the victory in the Great Patriotic War, we must profoundly disclose the greatness of the feats carried out by the Soviet people and their Armed Forces and more widely treat the experience of the defensive and offensive operations in its initial, more complex period.

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